School of Theology at Claremont
1001 1402742

CHURCH AND REFORM.

The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

inf 4th in E.T. Oct. 150

CHURCH AND REFORM:

BEING ESSAYS

RELATING TO REFORM IN THE GOVERNMENT

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BX
5150
C5

Ed.d by M. Barlow

Church and Reform:

BEING

ESSAYS

RELATING TO REFORM IN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Contributors:

THE BISHOP OF HEREFORD, THE DEAN OF NORWICH, CANON HAY AITKEN
CANON DENTON THOMPSON, THE REV. H. G. GREY, CHANCELLOR
P. V. SMITH, EUGENE STOCK, MONTAGUE BARLOW, THE
REV. DR. HUNTINGTON (NEW YORK), AND THE
REV. PROFESSOR CODY (TORONTO).

WITH APPENDICES BY
THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN KENNAWAY, BART., M.P.,
AND THE REV. H. J. BARDSLEY,

AND AN

INTRODUCTION BY THE BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL.

LONDON:
BEMROSE AND SONS, LTD., 4, SNOW HILL, E.C.;
AND DERBY.
1902.

All Rights Reserved.

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION.
By the LORD BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL - - - ix

THE PARISH AS THE BASIS OF REFORM.
By the LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD - - - 1

LEGISLATION: NOW AND HEREAFTER.
By P. V. SMITH, LL.D., Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester - - - - - - - - - 15

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY.
By the Rev. J. DENTON THOMPSON, Hon. Canon of Liverpool - - - - - - - - - 33

THE SPIRITUAL RIGHTS OF THE LAITY.
By the Very Rev. the DEAN OF NORWICH - - 45

THE LAY FRANCHISE.
By MONTAGUE BARLOW, LL.D., Official Principal to the Archdeacon of London - - - - - 63

EVANGELICAL CHURCHMEN AND MODERN CHURCH DEVELOPMENTS.
By EUGENE STOCK, Editorial Secretary to the Church Missionary Society - - - - - 75

THE NEED OF CORPORATE ACTION.
By the Rev. W. M. HAY AITKEN, Canon of Norwich - - - - - - - - - - 96

MISSIONARY CHURCHES AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.
By the Rev. H. G. GREY, Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford; formerly Principal of the Lahore Divinity College - - - - - - - 107

PAGE

AUTONOMY IN THE UNITED STATES.
By the Rev. DR. HUNTINGTON, Rector of Grace Church, New York - - - - - - - - 120

THE AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.
By the Rev. PROFESSOR CODY, M.A., of Wycliffe College, Toronto - - - - - - - - 140

APPENDIX "A"—THE PARLIAMENTARY PROSPECTS OF REFORM.
By the Right Hon. Sir JOHN KENNAWAY, Bart., M.P. - - - - - - - - - - 159

APPENDIX "B"—THE CHURCH FRANCHISE.
By the Rev. H. J. BARDSLEY, Rector of St. Paul's, Hulme, Manchester - - - - - - - 170

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE majority of the English contributors to the present volume, while generally in accord alike in their sympathy with the historical evangelical party in the Church of England and in their belief in the necessity of reform in its organization, naturally approach the subject from various points of view. Each contributor remains responsible for his own essay and for that alone. The Editor's work has gone little further than the suggesting of topics in order to avoid overlapping; the object of the volume is to promote discussion, not necessarily to secure uniformity of view, especially in matters of detail.

MONTAGUE BARLOW.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no surer sign of real life than the power of adaptation. A Church which is so stereotyped and stiff that it cannot adapt itself to changing times and to new needs and situations bears within itself the sentence of death. The truth of God can, indeed, never change. The Revelation which the New Testament contains is final. It cannot, in the present dispensation, be enlarged or diminished. But the manner in which its great truths are expressed may need from time to time to be modified and re-adjusted; and different ages and different lands will emphasise and make prominent different doctrines of "the faith once for all delivered to the Saints;" and new circumstances will bring out new teachings from the inexhaustible treasury of the Word of God. For one, and not the least, evidence of the Divine origin of the Christian revelation is that it meets the infinite cravings of the spirit of man in all stages of his life, and in all periods of the history of mankind, and that it is as well suited to the spiritual needs of the twentieth century as it was to those of the first.

If this be true of the Church's doctrine, it is equally true of the Church's discipline. We who

are members of the Church of England, without un-churching other religious communities, hold to an historic Episcopate as most in accordance with the will of God, and we devoutly believe that God "of His Divine Providence has appointed divers orders of ministers in His Church"; but for the rest we maintain that the Church in its government is not to be guided by cast-iron laws, but rather by great and living principles; that the exact fashion of the appointment of its ministers may change, and has changed; that their precise duties, responsibilities, and privileges may vary, and have varied; and that their methods of work, as well as the form of their message, must correspond to the character of the age in which they live.

For three hundred and fifty years the Church of England, which did not begin its history, but only its history as a reformed Society, at the Reformation, has preserved the main outlines which were then impressed upon it by the great and good men who, of like passions with ourselves, yet possessed a foresight, a courage, and a grasp of God's Word which we may well covet. Changes have, indeed, been made—some silently and almost unnoticed, some after serious discussion and fierce controversy; and still greater changes confront us to-day if the Church of England is to answer to the calls of the new century. No great principle must be surrendered, no part of her great heritage must be laid aside, not a single iota of primitive truth must be left behind, but as the constitution of our

country has been adapted to meet the needs of our age, so must the constitution of the Church be adapted to meet fresh claims and to satisfy fresh wants.

There are three changes which are imperiously called for: —

(i.) Bishops and clergy must no longer regard their benefices as their freehold. Capacity, not legal right, must be the condition of their tenure. Incapacity, indolence, unworthiness, physical and mental weakness must mean retirement from office. While the rights of the beneficed clergy are justly safeguarded, the rights of the people must be permanently and effectually secured. The clergy exist for the Church, and not the Church for the clergy.

(ii.) The laity must be admitted to an adequate share in the government of the Church. The principle already laid down by the appointment of churchwardens must be developed, extended, and carefully defined. The idea that the Church building is the peculium of the Vicar, and that he can do in it very much as he likes, without the slightest reference to the will of his parishioners, must be exploded and made impossible. The clergy are not the Church, though they are an important element in it. The laity, too, are priests, and their wishes must be consulted and their counsel sought.

(iii.). Our present ecclesiastical assemblies must be reformed, and the Church must have its own Parliament, representative alike of its clergy and of its laity, which shall possess the power

to transact the business of the Church with freedom and authority.

It is the object of this book to discuss some of the questions which the need of adaptation in the Church of England suggests. Its writers, for the most part, represent a school of Churchmanship which God has used in bygone days to effect great social reforms, like the abolition of the slave trade, and great spiritual reforms, like the re-leavening of the Church with the doctrines of the atonement and of conversion, but which hitherto has been conspicuous by its silence on current questions of ecclesiastical reform. If this school of religious thought is to emulate in the future its achievements in the past, its members must cast aside their indifference, or their timidity, or their rigid conservatism, and, looking facts steadily in the face, must make their voices heard in the Councils of the Church.

To refuse to face Church reform from a fear that autonomy may mean disestablishment, or that its results may be that some school of thought not their own will become predominant and squeeze them and their tenets out of the Church of England, is a policy of expediency whose nemesis will be paralysis and extinction. Our duty is to ask what is best for the cause of Christ, for the real religious welfare of the nation, and for the Church of England as a whole. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel, shall save it," is a divine principle which is as true of a Church, and a school of

thought, as it is of an individual. If we believe, as we do, that the Holy Spirit of God dwells with His Church, and guides its fortunes and over-rules its councils, it is for us, in dependence upon His presence and inspiration, to exercise a sanctified common sense, to think out the great problems that face us, and to seek to adapt the constitution of our Church to the needs of our day.

This has been the aim of the writers of this volume of Essays. They claim neither infallibility nor omniscience, but they have written as men who believe in God and love His Church, and who desire to lay before their brethren some of the results of their own careful thought upon the question of Church Reform. If the effect of what they have written is to stimulate others to think, to meet difficulties, to suggest plans of action, and to bring home the disastrous effect of inaction, they will not have laboured in vain. For the glory of God they have thought and written; and in humble dependence upon Him they send forth their thoughts to the public.

F. J. LIVERPOOL.

19, *Abercromby Square,*
Liverpool.

Essays on Church Reform.

THE PARISH AS THE BASIS OF REFORM.

By the Bishop of Hereford.

"Well begun," says the proverb, "is half done"; and if we have here a true proverb there can hardly be a more important enquiry in regard to any undertaking than this one—"How shall we begin it?"

With this warning in my mind, I ask myself the question, "Where and how should we begin our endeavours for Church Reform?" and the answer comes back with unvarying persistence, "If you are wise, you will begin with the parish."

Accordingly, the plea put forward in this essay is that the measure of ecclesiastical reform which deserves our first attention and support is the provision of a representative Church Council in every parish or ecclesiastical district. And I venture to hope that the reasons on which the claim is based will commend themselves favourably to any unbiassed mind.

The only measures that seem likely to compete with it for precedence in the field of practical politics are, on the one hand, a Discipline Bill, which might be pressed upon us by the Protestant section of the community, and, on the other, a Convocations Bill, which will doubtless be acceptable to the majority of the High Church clergy; and a very little consideration is sufficient to shew us how remote is the prospect of either of these being placed on the Statute Book and carried into successful operation.

It may, indeed, be admitted that, but for opposition inspired by motives of political expediency, any reasonable Discipline Bill would have a chance of passing both Houses of Parliament, so deeply has the more distinctly Protestant portion of the nation been offended and alarmed by the Romanizing tendency and the sacerdotal assumptions and practices of the more extreme High Church clergy and their followers, to say nothing of the widespread uneasiness and annoyance caused by the recent utterances and policy of the English Church Union, or the wholesome dislike so generally felt by English gentlemen to any spirit of disobedience to the law, or anything which strikes them as being a casuistical evasion of personal obligations solemnly undertaken.

This political opposition would, however, be almost certain to thwart any attempt to carry such a Bill, or at any rate it would cause long parliamentary delays, especially as it would be reinforced by the natural dislike so generally felt to coercive legislation in spiritual matters;

and it is by no means pleasant to think of all the unedifying controversy, the recriminations, the misunderstandings, and the bitterness which would be stirred up and intensified by such parliamentary discussions long drawn out.

Moreover, if we imagine the controversy ended and the Bill passed, its administration might prove to be almost as difficult as that of our new colonies in South Africa.

On the other hand, if we are to wait for the enactment of a Convocations Bill giving to the Church the power of self-government without intervention of Parliament, and the subsequent elaboration and acceptance of schemes of Church reform, to many of us this must seem practically equivalent to waiting for the Greek Calends.

It will also occur to many minds to enquire what practical difference would be made in the religious life of a particular parish by the passing of a Convocations Bill or a Discipline Bill, so long as the parishioners are left without any direct voice in the regulation of the worship provided for their benefit. What serious-minded parishioners, accustomed to local self-government, that is, to a reasonable share of power and influence in other matters, naturally ask of us is that they should be given some constitutional right to say how their common worship shall be conducted. They desire to be something more than the passive subjects of any incumbent who may be imposed upon them.

But while they are thus asking bread, we may be giving them a stone if we offer nothing

but a Discipline Act. Such an Act, even if it could be secured, would be felt to be little more than an expensive, elusive, and unsubstantial promise, our experience of the Public Worship Regulation Act having been sufficient to show how difficult it is to ensure the success of disciplinary legislation if it runs counter to any considerable body of sentiment.

As regards a Convocations Bill, it must be acknowledged that it would have little more immediate or direct influence on the religious life of a country parish than on the planet Mars.

Thus we are met by every variety of difficulties, delays, uncertainties, antagonisms, all sorts of rocks ahead, if we seriously propose to steer the Church through these large Parliamentary conflicts. The result of such a policy would most probably be that "all the voyage of our life will be bound in shallows and in miseries."

Meanwhile, however, whether we look to the needs or the dangers of the Church, we cannot afford to fold our hands and wait; and it is in our parishes that the needs arise and the troubles are felt, and the failures and the losses are taking place. It is there the shoe pinches, and it is there, if we are timely wise, we shall make haste to apply the needful remedies.

In the case of nearly every trouble by which the peace of the Church has been disturbed of late years, the root of the difficulty may be traced to the arbitrary powers possessed by the incumbent.

It says much for the good sense of our clergy as a body that these powers and this autocratic position are not more frequently abused; but no one who has had occasion to deal with instances of such abuse can fail to see that the autocratic and arbitrary powers which are secured by the present state of the law to every incumbent from the moment of his institution to his benefice, are liable to put an intolerable strain on the loyalty of parishioners, and may be said to constitute one of the chief dangers to the peace of the Church and even to the permanence of the establishment.

I know of hardly anything which tends more directly in many of our parishes to recruit the ranks and strengthen the influence of Nonconformity, or to drive strong men into a life of religious indifference. This attribute of arbitrary power even tends to raise a sort of resentful and undeserved prejudice against many a humble-minded and faithful parish priest,—a prejudice which acts as a barrier against his spiritual influence and renders much of his good work unfruitful.

Consequently, my desire is that our first legislative reform should aim at turning every incumbent from "a beneficed corporation sole holding the living and managing the services of the Church," in other words from an arbitrary despot, into a constitutional officer and minister of the parish in which he is ordained to serve, thus making him in the best and highest sense *servus servorum Dei.*

Such is my chief reason for claiming precedence on behalf of a Bill which would establish for every parish a system of reasonable and popular local self-government in Church affairs. And unless I misjudge the general feeling, it would be comparatively easy to effect the necessary legislation on the lines of a Church Parish Councils Bill. The sentiment in favour of such a measure is widespread, both among clergy and laity, and it is not confined to any one section or party, so that my proposal possesses the very strong negative recommendation of avoiding the rock of party divisions.

On the positive side it appeals to protestant sentiment as giving to lay parishioners a voice in the management of their Church and its worship, whilst it holds out the promise of such a reasonable amount of elasticity and variety, whether in regard to work or worship, as would tend to satisfy the main body of earnest High Churchmen.

But it may be asked, "How do you propose to define the duties and powers of such a council, and how would it work?"

To such an enquiry it is perhaps premature to attempt a detailed answer until the matter has received a larger amount of practical discussion; but I venture to submit that some such scheme as the following would be fair to both clergy and laity, would work without difficulty or danger, and would greatly invigorate and strengthen the Church by increasing the interest and activity of its lay members, and by upholding, or even extending, the varied and

comprehensive character which is essential for the maintenance of its national position and influence.

Such a Council would, it may be assumed, have certain reasonable powers conferred on it with reference to such matters as the maintenance and repair of the Church and other ecclesiastical buildings of the parish; the furniture of the Church; the purposes for which collections should be made in the Church; the management of ecclesiastical funds or charities; the management of Church schools, and so forth;* but besides all this, for the peace of the parish and to put and end to, or to minimize, our dangers and difficulties, the following provisions are of primary importance:—

(1) That if *during a vacancy* the parishioners petition the Bishop, through their Church Council, with reference to the mode of conducting public worship which they desire, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to make an order on the subject, having due regard to the wishes of the parishioners, and this order shall be binding on the new incumbent.

To estimate the value of this provision it is necessary to bear in mind the extent to which, under present conditions, both the Bishop and the parishioners themselves are quite helpless to secure the appointment of an incumbent in sympathy with the prevailing sentiment of a particular parish. In the diocese with which I am best acquainted the Bishop himself appoints only

* See Scheme for Parochial Church Government adopted by the Manchester Diocesan Conference, 1900.—ED.

thirty-two out of three hundred and seventy-eight incumbents, and he is practically powerless to prevent the appointment of an utterly unsuitable or unacceptable person to any one of the remaining three hundred and forty-six benefices in his diocese.

The consequence is that trouble may at any time arise in a parish through the intrusion into it of an incumbent who is, by upbringing, or training, or associations, or temperament, imbued with notions which put him entirely out of sympathy with the prevailing religious sentiment and the general wishes of the inhabitants. Such a man, by the conscientious, but arbitrary, exercise of his legitimate powers, not infrequently upsets the religious life of the parish, causes much pain to devout worshippers, intensifies party spirit, and drives some of his flock into dissent and others into the desert of practical indifference or irreligion.

Such a misfortune, by no means rare under our present system of patronage, would be to a great extent obviated by this provision.

(2) If an incumbent desires to make changes in the conduct of public worship he shall give due notice, and obtain the assent of his Church Council. If this assent is withheld, he may appeal to the Bishop, who, after conference with the Incumbent and the Council, and after full and careful consideration of the matter, shall make an order embodying his decision. Similarly, if the Council desires any reasonable and lawful change, and the incumbent declines to

make it, the Council may appeal to the Bishop, who shall give his decision as in the other case.

In considering or criticizing these suggestions, it is well to remember that the incumbent or minister of a parish exists for the parish—"What is Paul and what is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believe?"—and that our Church recognizes the indefensible right of private judgment in spiritual matters.

Consequently, parishioners may fairly claim that the public worship provided for them as members of the Church in the Book of Common Prayer should be in accordance with the common judgment and sentiment of those whom it is intended to edify; and the incumbent is placed in the parish to conduct its worship in the spirit that recognizes these conditions.

But under our present system a particular incumbent may be a young man of very little experience or insight, self-confident, and trained in some narrow school, or under some strong party or seminarist influence; he may have been presented to the living by some relative or friend, who may possibly have purchased the advowson for him, without any regard to his fitness for the post; and once duly instituted and inducted he may say in effect to his parishioners: "This is my theory of Christian worship, and this is my view of what ought to be the sacramental usage or ritual of our Church, and therefore, by virtue of my position and authority as your priest, I impose it on you for your souls' good, whether you like it or not."

This, indeed, is what happens not infrequently. In such cases the general feeling among men who have had experience of life is that such a priest misunderstands both the true character of the Church in which he is an office-bearer, and the people amongst whom, and for whom, he has been ordained to minister; but as his parishioners they are practically helpless either to check or to guide him.

If, however, his position were clearly defined, and his powers modified by legal enactment, as in these proposals, this would make it impossible for him to act in such a high-handed way, and it would also exercise a wholesome influence on a clergyman's training and on his habitual conception of the position he is to occupy, so that he would enter on his parochial relationships in a constitutional, instead of an arbitrary, spirit. Knowing beforehand that he would be bound to work with a representative council possessing its share of power, he would in most cases be found to accept the position frankly and loyally.

(3) If in any case the Bishop's order is objected to by either party, an appeal shall be allowed to the Archbishop, whose decision shall be final. This right of appeal will, I imagine, be felt to be in every way desirable. It will tend to make every Bishop more careful in his endeavour to meet the reasonable wishes of the parishioners and also to protect the clerk from factious or frivolous or unreasonable opposition. It is also a bond of Church union, providing a safeguard against the growth of undesirable diocesan uses.

(4) As regards penalties, it should be enacted that any clerk who shall disregard an order of the Bishop or Archbishop shall be forthwith admonished by the Bishop; and if he fails to obey the admonition within three months his disobedience shall, *ipso facto*, involve the immediate voidance of his benefice or loss of his license, as the case may be. This is suggested as the most simple and appropriate penalty. All proceedings for contempt of court should be obviated as far as possible; and where unavoidable, they should be left in the hands of the civil magistrate to be dealt with like any other breach of the law of the land.

There remains for consideration the important subject of the lay franchise. The question most frequently and most anxiously asked is: "Who are to have the privilege of voting at a Church Council election, and who may serve as members of such a Council?" And no real progress can be made towards any measure of self-government until we have arrived at a general agreement on these questions.

In certain quarters it is urged with some vehemence that every parishioner, to be qualified to vote, must be a communicant. This, we may freely acknowledge, is a counsel of perfection, but the claim is one which we are obliged to dismiss as altogether unpractical. We are agreed in the desire to see every Christian a communicant, but many of those who set the highest value on the Holy Communion would be most deeply opposed to any such return to Test

Act legislation; whilst it must be obvious to everyone that to establish a communicants' suffrage would so narrow the definition of membership as to destroy the national character of the Church and turn it into a sect.

Others plead that the suffrage should be confined to those who have been baptized and confirmed; but here again we have a restriction which, when we bear in mind how small a proportion of those whom the Church has always recognized as her children, have been so confirmed, is also felt to be incompatible with the maintenance of her national position.

In fact, any serious consideration of the question leads men of all parties—Conservative and Liberal alike—to the conclusion that the definition of Church membership which now practically includes every baptized person, must be kept and handed on as comprehensive and all-embracing as immemorial usage has made it hitherto. Therefore, my hope is that every parishioner otherwise qualified to vote in parochial affairs, who claims to be a Churchman and uses the church of his parish as his place of public worship, will be privileged both to vote as an elector and to be himself elected as a member of his Church Council.

Such, in bare outline, is the scheme for which I claim precedence.

It is based on the principle of local self-government, whilst it is kept altogether free from the disintegrating influence of congregationalism, everything being retained under episcopal and archi-episcopal authority.

It substitutes for the arbitrary, and sometimes capricious or self-willed, rule of an individual incumbent the constitutional principle which in other matters has been found to be the salt of public life.

On the other hand, it maintains just that amount of limitation in the conditions of active Church membership which is required to prevent the interference of dissenters or outsiders in the worship of any particular Church, and the regulation of its affairs.

The aim of my proposal is, in fact, to preserve the national character of the Church, and to secure to both clergy and laity a reasonable liberty, taking care to make the Church, under its new conditions, as tolerant, elastic, and all-embracing as may be consistent with the Pauline injunction that all things should be done decently and in order.

But, it may be said, such a measure would introduce into parishes a spirit of division and party rivalry, strife, antagonism. My experience, however, leads me to a different conclusion. Wherever an incumbent and his parishioners are in reasonable accord, things would go on very much as before; only with this desirable change, that in place of the indifference to Church affairs now so prevalent among men who call themselves Churchmen, the sense of a new share of power and influence would in many cases stir a new interest and a new feeling of personal responsibility.

The passive Churchman would become active; and if in a rare instance here or there some

friction should arise, such friction would be far better than the sullen discontent which is far more prevalent than some of us imagine, and is so apt to lead some men into nonconformity, and others into neglect of all religious observance.

So I commend these proposals as the medicine most urgently needed by our Church at the present time.

LEGISLATION: NOW AND HEREAFTER.

By P. V. Smith, LL.D.

Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester.

Church Legislation in the past.

Every community or association, whether civil or ecclesiastical, which is not in a state of paralysis or decadence, stands periodically in need of fresh legislation. Its original constitution, or the laws and regulations which were framed at a particular epoch in its history, may have been the best possible; but, as time goes on, it has to face a different environment; the desires and requirements of its members undergo a change, and its constitution and regulations become obsolete and out of harmony with the altered circumstances. The Church of England has not been exempt from this invariable liability of all human institutions. It is not necessary for our present purpose to review her history prior to the Reformation. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a result of that upheaval, her affairs were settled on a solid legal basis by a succession of measures which culminated in the Act of Uniformity of 1662. The period of activity, extending over nearly a century and a half, which then closed,

was followed by a period of comparative lethargy of about equal duration; and when, in the nineteenth century, the need of fresh ecclesiastical legislation became pressing, the conditions under which it could be obtained were in process of undergoing a radical alteration. Up to the end of the seventeenth century (if we exclude the period of the Commonwealth, which is not recognized in our Statute Book) the Church and the State were in the eye of the law regarded as consisting, and, for all practical purposes, did, in fact, consist, of the same individuals. Consequently, whatever Church laws were made by Parliament were made by the Church herself. If they had received the consent of Convocation they were made in accordance with sound ecclesiastical principles. If, on the other hand, by any chance a law affecting the Church did not receive that consent, it might be open to the reproach of having violated those principles, but it could not be said to have been imposed on the Church *ab extra*.

This state of things, however, was not destined to continue. In 1706 the Act of Union with Scotland introduced into Parliament Scotch Presbyterian members representing Presbyterian constituencies. In 1828 and 1829 the repeal of the Sacramental Test Acts and the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Act opened the doors of Parliament to English and Welsh Dissenters on the one hand and to Irish Roman Catholics on the other. Thirty years later Jews were admitted, and after another thirty years the

barrier which excluded Atheists and persons of no religion was removed. In no sense, therefore, can Parliament be said at the present time to be an assembly of Church laymen or to represent the laity of the Church as such. Church laymen are, of course, still represented in it and still have seats in it, but only as citizens, in common, in all respects, with their fellow-citizens who are not Churchmen.

Altered conditions in the present.

It will be observed that this change of situation has come into existence by degrees; and the first step, which was brought about by the Act of Union with Scotland, was probably taken without any consideration of the effect on Church legislation. We shall not, therefore, be surprised to find that its practical results were not at first apparent, and that only within the last twenty-five or thirty years have they obtruded themselves upon us in an acute form. The eighteenth century was a period of lethargy and inaction with respect to Church legislation as well as other Church matters. The union of the Churches of England and Ireland at its close was effected as a pure piece of State policy. And when the nineteenth century revival led first to the Church Building and New Parishes Acts of the later Georgian era, and then to the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and to drastic legislation with respect to the revenues of the Bishoprics and Cathedrals, coupled with further Church Building and New Parishes Acts, the old Parliamentary traditions were strong enough to

enable these measures to be carried without serious opposition. The Dissenters were too grateful for their newly-acquired civil privileges to think of obstructing the course of beneficial ecclesiastical legislation; and the Roman Catholics were restrained by the pledges on the subject on the faith of which their Emancipation Act had been passed, and the ink of which was then scarcely dry. On the other hand, the sittings of Convocation had been suspended since 1717, and Churchmen, enured to the idea by habit, were quite satisfied that the mixed Parliament should legislate for the Church. Except in the persons of the Bishops, the Church was not consulted, and, in her corporate capacity she expressed neither approval nor disapproval when, in 1832, the final hearing of ecclesiastical appeals was transferred from the Court of Delegates to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, nor even when in 1840 the Church Discipline Act was passed, which (except where recourse is had to the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, and except so far as it has been superseded by the Clergy Discipline Act, 1892) has ever since been, and still remains, the only law under which ecclesiastical discipline can be exercised over the clergy of our Church. After the revival of Convocation in 1852, ecclesiastical legislation continued to proceed for a time without friction. The relaxation of the strict terms of Clerical Subscription, which was

effected by the Act of 1865, was accompanied on the part of Convocation by a corresponding modification of the Canons of 1603; and even the election in 1868 of a reformed House of Commons, not possessing so strongly the traditions of the past, and entrusted with a mandate to disestablish the Irish branch of the United Church, did not create an immediate rift in the harmony. Mr. Gladstone, in spite of his attack on the Church in Ireland, was a strong Churchman; and probably his personal influence as Prime Minister had much to do with the smooth progress of ecclesiastical legislation in the Parliament which was dissolved in January, 1874. At any rate, two measures, as to which all schools of thought in the Church were in practical agreement, the Act which authorised the new Lectionary and the Act which sanctioned shortened and special forms of service, were passed in 1871 and 1872 without opposition. Another, the Public Worship Facilities Bill, which might in certain parishes have done much good, passed the House of Commons in 1873, but was wrecked in the Lords through the unfortunate opposition of Lord Shaftesbury. In the subsequent Parliament, Bills were passed establishing six new bishoprics; and the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, became law. The Legislature is certainly not to be congratulated on this last achievement. It failed to carry out the designs of its promoters and it aroused bitter hostility among a wide circle of Churchmen who were not actually affected

by its provisions. The succeeding Parliament, which was elected in the spring of 1880, was markedly antagonistic to the Church. It commenced its career by enacting the Burials Act of that year; and even Mr. Gladstone, by putting forth all his personal influence, with difficulty induced it to pass, four years afterwards, the Bill for separating the Bishopric of Bristol from that of Gloucester. The opposition to that Bill and to the Clergy Discipline Bill, 1892, for dealing more easily and expeditiously with criminous and immoral clergymen, furnished the most glaring instances of obstruction to ecclesiastical legislation, simply because it was ecclesiastical. But the ultimate passing of this last measure and the passing, after repeated failures, of the Tithe Act, 1891, for facilitating the recovery of tithes, and the Benefices Act, 1898, for removing gross abuses connected with the sale and transfer of advowsons, have shewn that in an Unionist Parliament it is still possible to obtain ecclesiastical legislation on subjects as to which all Churchmen are practically agreed.

Need for Autonomy.

We have, however, learnt at the same time that it is absolutely hopeless to expect Parliament, as at present constituted, to make laws or regulations for the Church on subjects on which Churchmen are not in accord. Yet it is precisely on these subjects that legislation is most needed, since in its absence every one is, more or less, a law to himself. Some plan is required, first of ascertaining what the Church

as a whole, as distinguished from a noisy section of it, really desires, and then of carrying these wishes into effect. In other words, we require a certain amount of autonomy, that is to say, within reasonable limits, power of legislation with the assent of the Sovereign and subject to the veto of Parliament.

Without going into the question of how this is to be obtained, let us hazard a forecast of how, if acquired, it would work as regards method and subjects. To begin with the method. Autonomy involves the acquisition by the Church of a legislative machinery and legislative powers.

Legislative Machinery and Powers.

(i.) First, as to the machinery. It may be assumed that following the precedents set by other branches of the Anglican communion, the legislative body would be composed of three elements, the Bishops, representatives of the clergy, and representatives of the laity. The Upper Houses of Convocation in the two Provinces already supply the first element. The Lower Houses, if reformed and enlarged, would supply the second; and Houses of Laymen, formally constituted upon a satisfactory basis and adequately representing the laity, would supply the third. Liberty would be acquired for the two Convocations, with their Lay Houses, to sit together as one Church Assembly, and for the three orders, or, at any rate, the clergy and laity, to sit and debate as one House. It does not follow that advantage would always be taken of this liberty. It would be used or not

according to circumstances and to the matters to be transacted. The right to demand a vote by orders on any contested point would, of course, be reserved; and it would be laid down that no resolution or proposal should be carried if it was negatived by a majority of any one order. Where it was proposed to amend the existing laws of the Church or to frame any new law, the procedure would be by canon or scheme.

(ii.) Secondly, as to the powers. An Act would be passed that any canon or scheme made by the legislative Church Body, with the Royal licence and assent (which would remain an essential element in the procedure) should be laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament for a certain period, and if within that period no address adverse to it was presented to the Sovereign by either House, it should become the law of the land. This would give to Parliament the opportunity which it ought to have of vetoing any proposal of the Church legislature which it considered inconsistent with the national welfare. But Parliament would be bound either to accept or to reject the proposal *en bloc*. No power would be reserved to it to alter the details. It is sometimes objected against this mode of procedure that owing to pressure of business or political circumstances the opportunity of a fair and adequate discussion of an unsatisfactory canon or scheme might never actually be afforded. If under the existing law or practice of Parliament there

would be any danger of this occurring, special provision ought to be made to preclude the risk. The Church would desire that the State should have ample facilities for deciding whether a proposed Church law is or is not consistent with the interests of the nation. What she objects to is that her internal regulations should be liable to be fashioned and tinkered in every minute particular by individuals who disclaim her membership and communion.

Parochial Church Councils.

(ii.) Next, as to the subjects of legislation. One detail which would probably soon be taken in hand is the formation of Parochial Church Councils. There is a very general *consensus* of opinion as to the expediency of these; but the wide divergence of opinion which exists as to their proper constitution and powers would render it impossible, even if it were desirable, to obtain their creation by Act of Parliament. The late Earl of Harrowby, when Viscount Sandon, introduced into the House of Commons in 1871 a Bill for their establishment. In consequence, however, of this divergence of opinion, it achieved no progress during that year, nor in any subsequent session. No means as yet exist of ascertaining the mind of the Church as a whole—Bishops, Clergy and Laity—upon the various details of the scheme. But in a Church legislative body these details could be fairly and fully discussed. Unanimity upon them would, of course, be as remote as ever; but opportunity would be afforded for compromise and mutual concession; and, in the

last resort, the views of the minority would have to give way to those of the majority. It is difficult to see how legislation on this subject could fail to secure the assent of the Crown or run any risk of being vetoed in Parliament.

Other subjects of autonomous action.

There are other pressing questions for which a representative Church Assembly might be expected to find a solution. The depreciation in the incomes of the old rural livings and the inadequate incomes of many of the newly-created urban benefices have long been a scandal to the Church, and are now threatening seriously to cripple her practical usefulness. Numerous small parishes urgently require to be united; and we need further modifications in the law of patronage and facilities for the retirement of aged and incapacitated incumbents. The remedies which at present exist for these evils are, at most, mere palliatives; but a Church assembly would, doubtless, make a serious attempt to grapple with them. It would, moreover, possess the advantage of being able in an authoritative manner to express the mind of the Church upon social questions. At present she has no means of exercising the proper influence to which she is entitled on such matters as temperance legislation, and the threatened inroad on our marriage law by the legalization of union with a deceased wife's sister. Had such an assembly existed in 1857, it is almost certain that our law as to divorce and re-marriage would not have been framed exactly as it then was. Moreover, the Assembly

would supply a safeguard for Church property and interests, which now continually suffer injustice owing to the absence of proper protection. Solitary incumbents in their separate parishes are generally neither able nor willing to incur the expense and unpopularity of asserting the pecuniary rights of themselves and their successors. It is not fair upon themselves, nor conducive to their spiritual influence over their people, that they should be called upon to do so. Few Churchmen are aware of the losses which, owing to the want of due defence of her interests, the Church has of late years sustained in burial fees and rights over burial grounds, and in other directions, in part without any actual legislation, and in part through the direct or indirect operation of the Parish Councils Act, 1894, the London Government Act, 1899, and other statutes.

Restoration law and order.

But the main result to be immediately anticipated from the acquisition of autonomy by the Church would be the restoration of law and order. No doubt, at first sight, this would appear to be a judicial and not a legislative matter, to be brought about by discipline and not by law-making. But tribunals owe the power which they wield and the respect which is paid to them to the fact of their judgments being in harmony with prevalent opinion. Decisions of the secular courts are continually set aside as improper or inconvenient by Acts of Parliament passed for the express purpose of overruling them. If this power of

Parliament did not exist, cases would soon arise in which judgments of the Royal Courts, given with perfect honesty and in strict accordance with existing law, would cause as much dissatisfaction and outcry as any which have been delivered on ecclesiastical questions by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The fact is that no judicial tribunal, however perfect its composition, ought to have the last word on these ecclesiastical questions. For they for the most part turn upon the observance of laws and regulations made 250 or 300 years ago. But these are not in all respects suited to modern habits and conditions of life and to the modes of thought and expressions of the twentieth century. This has, in fact, been tacitly recognised. But, unfortunately, there is a difference of opinion and practice as to which of the laws and regulations should be retained and which should be let go; and they admittedly differ in importance. The result has been a general prevalence of lawlessness, of which some of us resent certain aspects, and some of us resent others. It is vain to appeal to the old laws to correct this. What we require is the exercise by the Church of the power which, according to our Twentieth and Thirty-fourth Articles, she possesses, so far as is consistent with loyalty to Scripture, of decreeing rites and ceremonies and deciding controversies of faith, and of changing traditions and ceremonies according to the diversities of countries, times and men's manners. But this

power is to be exercised not by judges interpreting the mind of the bygone Church of England of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but by the living Church of England of the twentieth century, expressing her own collective opinion through an adequate legislative channel. When she is enabled to utter that opinion authoritatively, there will be an end to the scandal which now prevails of irresponsible members of her communion asserting her law to be that which happens to accord with their own predilections and notions.

Legislation on Ritual.

The desired result would be attained by legislation which dealt with obsolete or obscure or unworkable rubrics of the Prayer Book. The present writer would personally be in favour of its also dealing with the authorisation of additional services and of greater elasticity in our forms of public worship. This is, no doubt, treading on thorny and contentious ground, but he believes that the attendant difficulties must be courageously and trustfully faced. While the case for Autonomy does not depend on this aspect of it, he would personally desire that the acquisition of it should enable the Church to bring her law of ritual into harmony with the requirements of the present day. Our actual ritual has, already, to some extent been harmonised with these requirements. But this has been effected by the unauthorised action of individual incumbents, who with the tacit consent or deliberate non-interference of the Ordinary, have taken the law into their own

hands. Some have gone further than others, and the directions in which the law has been transgressed have been very diverse. It may, however, be safely asserted that there is not a single parish in the kingdom in which the rubrics of the Prayer Book are fully and accurately carried out. In some Churches the violations of the law have been flagrant and have excited widespread resentment. But the prevailing lawlessness has rendered it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to deal effectively with these extreme cases.

Moreover, some of the rubrics themselves are so difficult of interpretation as to present serious stumbling-blocks to the intelligences and consciences of the clergy. The Ornaments Rubric and the Rubric before the Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service have, no doubt, received judicial interpretation. But that interpretation, while it has an imperative claim on the obedience of Churchmen, does not necessarily bind their understandings. They cannot help exercising their right of private judgment in criticism of it, and the result of that criticism is by no means universally favourable. In the region of civil affairs, under similar circumstances, an Act of Parliament would undoubtedly be passed, setting forth the actual law in clear language and in terms consistent with the requirements of the times. In the opinion of the present writer, until we get a similar amendment of the Ornaments Rubric, we shall never return to an orderly observance

of law in our Church; and that amendment can only be attained through autonomy.

There are some amongst us who do not hesitate to confess that the possibility of alterations in our rubrics and law of ritual is to their minds one of the strongest arguments against autonomy. "Better," they affirm, "our present chaos, or a hard and fast adhesion to regulations framed two or three centuries ago, than a re-adjustment of them to modern needs, which may involve some details not altogether acceptable to ourselves." Those who thus contend for the absolute immutability of the Prayer Book do not find any support for their views from that Book itself. On the contrary, in its Preface, while we find on the one hand a warning as to the inconvenience of changes made without evident necessity, we are taught that, on the other hand, "the particular forms of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent, and alterable, and so acknowledged; it is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in place of authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient." We may confidently hope and expect that if any action is ever taken in this direction it will be on the lines of leaving the present Prayer Book as the standard of our public worship, and permitting, with certain

consents, specified deviations from it on the one side and the other. Such a modification of the existing law would give explicit sanction to some practices which are now in vogue among one or other of our schools of thought, but which are at present of doubtful legality or declared illegality. On the other hand, it would expressly stamp as illegal any practices which were outside the prescribed limits of deviation. It would, thenceforth, be impossible for any individual who practised them to claim that they were required or permitted by the law of the Church of England. This, of itself, would be no slight gain.

Ultimate object of Autonomy.

After all, however, the making of laws and the obeying of laws are not ends in themselves; they are but means to an end, namely, the well-being of the Church. And the Church, again, is a means to a yet further end, the maintenance and development of the Christian religion in the world. Looking at the extent to which this ultimate object is injured and retarded by our unhappy divisions—those which prevail within as well as those which exist outside our own Communion—it is clear that any legislation which, without sacrificing principle, would have the effect of composing those differences, would be of enormous importance in the interests not merely of the Church but of Christianity itself. Such legislation, in order to be beneficial, must necessarily be in the direction of liberty and relaxation of uniformity. There are persons who shrink from this on the ground that it

would legalise theological and ceremonial errors. But are these errors excluded by our present adherence to the system of statutory uniformity which was laid down some centuries ago? No; they flourish, in spite, or perhaps it might more accurately be said, on account of it. For when it is sought to repress them by means of the old system, the strain is found to be too great and the system breaks in our hands. We do well to remember that the sting of all religious error lies in its claim to be the exclusive truth. Endeavour artificially to suppress it, and you pander to its sense of its own importance. But tolerate it, not as a part of the Catholic faith, but as a mere opinion—taking care that the Church by her laws, her formularies, and her doctrinal utterances shall expressly relegate it to the category of opinions, as distinguished from dogmas—and you deprive it of its dangerous character. Among finite beings there will always be differences in the modes of regarding truth; and the tendency of our minds is to consider these differences incompatible with each other. To disabuse ourselves of this notion is the first essential step towards the reunion of Christendom.

In 1888, and again in 1897, the prelates of the Anglican Communion, assembled at Lambeth, affirmed as a basis for that reunion the acceptance of four Articles—(i.) Holy Scripture as the ultimate standard of faith; (ii.) the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the one as the baptismal symbol and the other as the

sufficient statement of the faith; (iii.) the two Sacraments ministered as they were instituted by Christ Himself; and (iv.) the Historic Episcopate, with local adaptations. If our Church is ever to unite with other Christian bodies on this simple and primitive basis, legislation will be necessary, and legislation of a kind which will only be possible if the Church is endowed, more or less, with autonomous powers.

Many of us have put our hands to the plough in this matter in the earnest hope that autonomy will ultimately promote reunion. We desire autonomy for its own sake as being in principle the rightful condition of the Church. We desire it for the benefits which it will confer on the Church itself. But we desire it above all for the promise which it affords of placing the Church in a position in which she could take part in a general reunion of Christendom. That reunion, if it ever takes place, must be on a basis which will satisfy the existing non-episcopalian bodies as well as the episcopalian communions. The prospect of it is remote as yet. But there are not wanting signs of its nearer approach; and if it ever actually comes to pass, it will either be in itself the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ upon Earth or will be the immediate precursor of that consummation.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY.

By the Rev. J. Denton Thompson, M.A.

Rector of North Meols, Southport, and Hon. Canon of Liverpool.

The terms Priesthood and Laity.

At first sight, the title of this paper may appear to express a contradiction in terms. "The priesthood" is generally accepted as a synonym for the ministry, and "the laity" is popularly understood as an antithesis to the clergy. But the apparent contradiction arises from the contraction both terms have suffered, and in the case of the former, the result is certainly misleading. However unaccustomed we may be to the thought, and still more to the phrase, "the priesthood of the laity" embodies and emphasizes a most important truth. Every Christian layman is a true priest.

Definition of Laity.

In our attempt to define and enforce the doctrine of the lay priesthood, we must begin by explaining the sense in which we understand the terms. "The laity" in its original meaning embraces all "the people" (λαός) of God without distinction, but for the sake of convenience we use it here in its popular sense as distinguishing those in the Church who are not admitted to "Holy Orders."

Priesthood. "The priesthood," even when it is limited to the clergy, is an ambiguous term, and therefore demands more accurate definition. It is well known that the word "priest" stands for two totally distinct and widely different words in the Greek—"*hiereus*"* (ἱερέυς) one who offers sacrifices; and "*presbuteros*" (πρεσβύτερος) an elder. From the former our English word derives its sacrificial sense, and from the latter its literal form. It is obvious that in the use of a word which expresses one of two meanings so diverse, an explanation of the sense in which it is to be understood is indispensable. Much of the controversy which centres around the term "priest" would cease if its two meanings were recognized and the sense intended were defined. In the Prayer Book the word is the abbreviation of Presbyter (πρεσβύτερος) and its liturgical use is therefore governed by its literal meaning. "Priest" in our services is, in fact, "presbyter writ short." In the New Testament the word is the translation of *hiereus* (ἱερέυς), and its Scriptural use is, therefore, to be understood in its sacrificial sense. The Church, as the society of the redeemed, is called a
Peter ii. 5-9. "priesthood" (ἱερατευμα) and individual Christians are described as "priests" (ἱερεις). This being so, it is impossible for us to exclude the
Rev. i, 6. term in its sacrificial sense from our Christian vocabulary, however difficult, and at times even misleading, its use may be. Before, however, seeking to understand the priestly character of

* In Hebrew *Kohen*. In Latin *Sacerdos*.

the Church and the sense in which every Christian is a priest, we must first grasp the essential idea of priesthood. When we turn to the history of religions we observe that priesthood and sacrifice not only express universal ideas, but are also correlative terms. As the result of a primeval revelation or the expression of a natural instinct we find men everywhere seeking by means of sacrifice to obtain the pardon or protection of Deity, and wherever the sacrifice is, there is of necessity the priest. In other words, a priest involves a sacrifice and a sacrifice a priest. A sacrifice is the offering of a priest, and a priest is the offerer of a sacrifice. In the earliest record of sacrificial offerings there is a difference in the spirit of the offerers and in the nature of the offerings, but there is no difference in the definition of the sacrifices. From primeval times to the present the essential idea in sacrifice is that of an offering to God, and in priesthood, that of the person by whom the offering is made.

The essential idea of Priesthood.

Gen. iv. 3-5.

For Christians, however, the norm of all priestly ideas and sacrificial rites is the person and work of Christ. He is the archetypal Priest in Whom all that is typical and true in all priesthoods and all that is taught directly or indirectly in the Old Testament is fulfilled. His priestly character is displayed in His sacrificial work. He was "sanctified and sent into the world" to offer Himself a Sacrifice for the world's sin, and thus in the fulness of our human nature to become the Priest of our fallen race. The incarnation of the Eternal Son was, indeed, a stupendous sacrifice, but inasmuch as He "became flesh" not

The Priesthood of Christ.

only to reveal God to man, but also to redeem man to God, and as this redemption could only
Matt. xx. 28. be accomplished by "giving His life," His death on the Cross was an act of self-oblation.
Heb. ix. 14. On the altar of Calvary "He offered Himself without spot to God." There He made "by His one oblation once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." In the power of this perfect, and therefore completed,* sacrifice,
Heb. ix. 12. He "entered into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us," and there "He ever liveth," the Priest on the Throne, "to make intercession" for His Church.

The Priesthood of the Church. The priesthood of Christ has for its final purpose the restoration of man from the guilt and power of sin to God. This restoration is realized by our union with Christ, and in Him we have the unspeakable privileges of access, fellowship and service. Thus redeemed humanity becomes
1 Pet. ii. 4-9. "a holy priesthood," "a royal priesthood," and
Rev. i. 6, v. 10. individual Christians are "made priests unto God." All the characteristics and rights of priesthood, as they were typified by the Aaronic order and fulfilled in the person of Christ Himself, are now the inalienable possession of every true child of God. Sanctification, access, communion, oblation, intercession, benediction, which briefly define the privileges and functions of the priesthood, belong to every living member of Christ's body, the Church. "It is not sufficiently felt that in the strictest and fullest meaning of

* *cf.*—Dimock. *The Doctrine of Sacerdotium*, p. 50.

the words the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a priestly Church, or that priestliness is even the prime element of her being, because it is the prime element in the being of her glorified Head.*

The Church consists of laity and clergy.

But the Church is a spiritual organism, consisting of the laity and the clergy, of the former even more than of the latter. As members of Christ's mystical body and in virtue alone of their union with the Head, clergy and laity alike are "priests unto God." There is, of course, a distinction which every true Churchman recognizes between those who have been called to the ministry and those to whom they are ordained to minister, but the distinction so far as the priesthood is concerned is one of ecclesiastical function and not of spiritual character. The laity are not less priestly than the clergy, nor are they priests in a different sense. The whole Church without distinction is a priesthood, and every true member thereof, whether clerical or lay, is a priest. In so far as the spiritual life of the individual "member" can be considered apart from "the body," and especially in his personal and direct intercourse with God, there is no difference between the priesthood of the clergy and the priesthood of the laity. But in the organic life of the Church there is, by necessity, diversity of function. Men are called of God and ordained by the Church to personify, so to speak, and in public worship to represent the priesthood of the whole body. "The ordained priests are priestly only because it is the

Distinction between clergy and laity.

The Priesthood of the clergy.

* Milligan, *The Ascension of Christ*, p. 24.

Church's prerogative to be priestly." * They are chosen to be the official representatives of the universal priesthood, but in no sense are they priests as diminishing much less as abrogating the priesthood of the laity. The Christian ministry "cannot possibly absorb into itself the spiritual functions of the Church. Rather it will quicken and develop in the Church the sense and exercise of spiritual functions." † The idea of an exclusive priesthood of the clergy, apart from and independent of the laity even possessing, as it is alleged, the right of discharging vicariously priestly functions on their behalf is contrary to the plain and direct teaching of the New Testament. "For communicating instruction and for preserving public order, for conducting public worship and dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people were never regarded as being transferred or even delegated to these officers. ‡ The writers of the New Testament directly and indirectly declare the whole Church to be a priesthood and the individual Christian to be a priest, but they neither adopt the priestly title to describe the ministerial order, nor do they attribute priestly functions as exclusive prerogatives to the Apostles or to the Apostolic Ministry. In harmony with this teaching of the Scriptures are the views of the earliest Christian

* Dr. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 258.

† Bishop Moule, *Ephesian Studies*, p. 199.

‡ Bishop Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 184.

writers. Not until quite late in the second century was the title "priest" used to designate the clergy, and even then, its gradual adoption was accompanied by the emphatic declaration of the priesthood of the whole Church. Whether the later rise of an exclusive sacerdotalism of the clergy is to be explained by pagan influences or Jewish ideas,* it clearly cannot be traced to Apostolic sources. The teaching of the New Testament is that the Christian priesthood is co-extensive with the whole Church, that the clergy are not, therefore, a sacerdotal order in the Church, but that the faithful laity no less than the ordained ministry are priests unto God. Summary.

But if the essential idea in priesthood be the offering of sacrifices, what are the sacrifices it is the function of the Christian priesthood to offer? We may broadly divide all sacrificial offerings into two classes—(1) those which are dedicatory and (2) those which are expiatory. The former express the idea that all men and all things belong to God, and only as they are really His, can they fulfil the end of their existence. The latter declare that all men, and in some mysterious way all things, are alienated from God by sin, and only as sin is expiated, can man and the world be restored to fellowship with God. This distinction, easily discernible in all sacrifices—Pagan, Jewish and Christian—is clearly recognized by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the words "Every high priest is ordained . . . to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins." The nature of Christian Sacrifices. Heb. v. 1.

* *cf.*—Bishop Lightfoot. *Philippians*, p. 260. Litton, *The Church of Christ*, p. 251.

Both the "gifts" which express the dedication of man to God and the "sacrifices for sin" which set forth the propitiation to God for man were "offered" by our great High Priest, even Christ. As the representative man and man's representative, He fulfilled alike the dedicatory and expiatory order of sacrifices. In a life wholly and always devoted to God, He realized the one, and in a death voluntarily and vicariously offered He "finished" the other. But if all expiatory sacrifices were fulfilled and ended in Christ—and according to the teaching of the Scriptures and the Church they were—there remain those which are dedicatory. These are the only sacrifices to which there is any reference in the New Testament and of which there is any mention in the Prayer Book. "Ourselves," our "bodies," "praise and thanksgiving," "doing good and communicating," our "faith," our alms and the results of spiritual work are the only sacrifices of which the inspired writers speak as belonging to the Christian body; and in the Holy Communion, which is indeed the Church's great Eucharistic Sacrifice, the three-fold offerings or sacrifices we there present are declared to be "our alms and oblations," our "praise and thanksgiving," and "our souls and bodies." These, then—and these only—are the "spiritual sacrifices" it is our bounden duty and service to offer as true Christians, as loyal Churchmen, and as priests indeed. And only as these offerings are made is the purpose of Christ's priestly work fulfilled and the end of His sacrificial death

Expiatory Sacrifices finished.

Dedicatory Sacrifices alone remain.

Rom. vi. 13. xii. 1.

Heb. xiii. 15.

Phil. ii. 17, iv. 18. Rom. xv. 16.

1 Peter ii. 5.

realized. For in the proportion in which Christ lives in us will His Spirit reveal itself in a life of self-oblation to God and self-sacrifice for man. But if the Church be judged by the principle of priestliness, and if individual Churchmen be tested by the spirit of self-sacrifice, what need there is for us to pray and work for a revival of true priesthood amongst us! There is, explain it how we may—and the causes are many and manifold—a grievous lack of lay consecration to, and of lay co-operation in, the work of the Church. The priesthood of the laity, if not actually denied, is widely ignored, and three results are visible to all who have eyes to see, (1) the laity have lost many of their most sacred rights, and are neglecting many of their most solemn obligations; (2) the clergy are becoming—and inevitably if the priesthood of the laity be ignored—a sacerdotal order; (3) the Church is seriously crippled in every department of her work for God and the world. The remedy lies in a great and widespread revival of the lay priesthood. This would do more than anything else to remove the abuses, supply the needs, and solve the problems which beset the Church to-day. If every Churchman realized that he was indeed a "priest," with the right of immediate access to God at all times, sanctified to His service in Baptism, anointed with power in Confirmation, and refreshed and strengthened in the Holy Communion, that he might offer himself continually "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," and

The Lay Priesthood ignored.

Results.

The Lay Priesthood recognised.

Result.

if every layman would but claim his priestly rights and fulfil his priestly duties in the government, worship and work of the Church, the spiritual results upon the nation, the empire, and the world at large would be great beyond conception.

Church reform.

The laity would recover their rightful position and discharge their neglected responsibilities in the administration of the affairs of the Church, parochial, diocesan and national. The present system, if system it may be called! by which the parish is mainly, and in some cases almost exclusively, controlled by the clergy; the diocese is ruled by the Bishop without a duly constituted council of clergy and laity; and the Church as a whole is subject to a Parliament which no longer represents the lay voice of the Church, would pass away before a truer and fuller expression of Church life. The laity, by means of parish councils, diocesan synods, and a national assembly would resume the position they held in the Apostolic Church, and with due safeguards for the rights of the State, the Church would recover the full powers of self-government.

Church worship.

The revival of the lay priesthood would inspire new life and interest in the worship of the Church. The ritual excesses of which loyal Churchmen complain would more easily be restrained by the direct influence and power of the laity within the sober, moderate and scriptural limits of our liturgy. Without despising prophecy nor the prophets, we should hear less "of going to Church to hear" this or that clergyman, and more of "giving to God the honour due

unto His Name." While appreciating music and —in many churches—musical services, we should not have cold, formal, unspiritual worship rendered too frequently by the clergy and choir only, but warm, bright, hearty congregational services, in which the priesthood of the whole Church would be declared by and realised in the unspeakable privilege of common worship.

Church work.

The work of the Church at home and abroad would be immensely strengthened and extended by the wider recognition of the lay priesthood. The cry is constantly heard that Christianity is losing its hold upon the masses in our great cities, and that secularism is spreading amongst all grades of the people. In support of this cry there are not a few ominous signs. An alarming proportion of the people habitually absent themselves from public worship. The attendance in the Sunday Schools of the country shows a serious decline. The population of the towns is increasing so rapidly that the Church is not supplying the machinery nor the men adequate to the need. The rich migrate to the suburbs and residential towns, and the poor are left to the parishes in which slums increase and hovels multiply, and to the clergy, who not seldom live the life of heroes and die the death of martyrs. These and other signs of the times call loudly for the help of Christian laymen, inspired and empowered by the Holy Ghost; and until the response is seen in the consecration of more men and money to Christ and His Church, the condition of the

country, viewed spiritually, cannot be expected to improve. If from the work at home we look to the needs abroad, what do we see? At the commencement of the twentieth century of the Christian era, two-thirds of the world unevangelized! a thousand millions still living without the knowledge of God's love in Christ! and this notwithstanding the last command of the Church's Lord, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel." The providence of God has given to Britain an ever-extending Empire which embraces nearly a third of the population of the whole earth. "What does it mean but that there is gathered together here a power for the propagation of the word such as never existed before in the world?"* The work of the Church at home and abroad is the work of the whole Church and of every member thereof, of the laity no less than the clergy; and this work can only be done as every Churchman realizes his priesthood and consecrates himself in the spirit of sacrifice to the service of God.

Rom. xii. 1. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

* Archbishop of Canterbury.

THE SPIRITUAL RIGHTS OF THE LAITY.

By the Very Rev. the Dean of Norwich.

In the opinion of the writer of this paper, the programme of the Church Reform League is enfeebled and narrowed by an essential and fatal restriction. It regards "matters of faith, worship, and discipline" as "the province of the spirituality."* It considers the exercise of any power by the laity on these as an "encroachment." It is the aim of this article to invalidate each of these positions. It is claimed for the laity that they have rights—spiritual, inalienable, and historical—in matters of faith, worship, and discipline. It is submitted that the exclusive claim "of the spirituality" over these is an unscriptural and unhistorical encroachment.

Attitude of the Church Reform League.

At the outset we have to answer an inquiry which meets us at every turn in discussing Church Reform, "Who is the layman?" The inquiry is important, pertinent, and practical. Church Reform, as it affects the parish, the diocese, or the province, starts with the principle of representation. This raises the question of franchise as exercised by two classes: the

Who are the Laity?

* Church Reform League, No 2.

elector and the elected. Our minds must be settled on this point before we can think clearly about reform or the exercise of those rights which are claimed for or denied to the laity.

The interest of the question is heightened because of the national position of the Church of England, the theory of which is that every resident in every parish has a claim upon the parochial clergyman. Of no other moral or spiritual teacher in the country can this be said. As a matter of fact, thousands of persons have contracted themselves out of this right. They disparage the mode of worship which the State has sanctioned. They decline the services of him who holds the Church's license to provide moral and spiritual aliment and education for all within the parish. Such persons, conscientious, earnest, or indifferent, cannot claim the right to interfere with worship, which they disparage, and with a worker, whom they supersede or disown. Their rights, as nominally within the range of the Church's ministries, are sufficiently recognised by the exercise of the parliamentary franchise. So long as the affairs of the Church are, in any sense, submitted to the consideration of the Senate, and so long as non-conforming citizens have a share in forming the Senate, so long and so far are their parochial rights recognised. Beyond this few reasonable men desire to go. More than twenty years ago Mr. Gladstone, when resisting the Public Worship Regulation Act, asked the Legislature to accept the following resolution: "It is to be desired that the

members of the Church having a legitimate interest in her services should receive ample protection against precipitate and arbitrary changes in established custom by the sole will of the clergyman or against the wishes locally prevalent amongst them." If Churchmen are to be protected against such disturbances as are here recognised, even when set up by the licensed incumbent, how much more should they be protected against similar disturbances if inflicted by those who supplant the ministry and subsidize separatist services? Such laymen exclude themselves from any share in parochial, diocesan, or provincial church councils. The "layman" of our inquiry is not an adherent of the National Church. This narrows the area of our question. It leads us to recognize in every baptized and confirmed parishioner who is willing to sign a certificate affirming his adherence to the Church of his baptism, and denying his membership of any sectarian society, one who possesses electoral rights. The elector would, therefore, be a baptized and confirmed adherent of the Church, including women of full age, as in nearly half the dioceses in America, and in a full fourth of those in Colonial Churches, as well as in the Established and Episcopal Churches of Scotland, though not in the Church of Ireland.

Qualification of Electors and Elected.

The elected ought to be, in addition, communicants. Summoned to participate in administration, the utmost care should be taken lest individual disobedience should minimise the blessing of God. The supreme command of the

Saviour implies personal acceptance of His mission: "Do this in remembrance of Me."

We are now in the presence of the inquiry, What work is to be committed to those so qualified? So far as the parish is concerned and the influence of the elected on a parish council goes, they will be allowed various powers.* But passing these by, as they have been dealt with elsewhere, we come to the crucial question which is in our minds all along, What is the position of the laity as to doctrinal questions. The answer of the Church Reform League is: "We do not desire that laymen should have any share in ecclesiastical deliberations which have for their end the determination of doctrinal questions for the purposes of Church government."

Powers of the Elected.

It is advantageous to have a statement as clear and candid as is this. It sends us at once to Holy Scripture, to learn thereby whether laymen were, in the nature of things, denied any gift, the absence of which disabled them from being present at ecclesiastical deliberations or debarred them from any share in the determination of doctrine.

When we study the first half-page in the Acts of the Apostles we come upon an instructive incident. The Lord has ascended into heaven. His followers number one hundred and twenty, including holy women. St. Peter, taught, in all probability, during the forty days by the Risen Lord, the importance of corporate life, proposes to elect a successor to Judas Iscariot. He is

Election of Matthias.

* See Bishop of Hereford's Essay, p. 1.

careful as to the necessary qualifications. They are temporal. There must be association, a terminus *a quo* and a terminus *ad quem*. They are doctrinal and historical. There must be witness of the resurrection of the Redeemer. These qualifications are accepted as essential and adequate. The one hundred and twenty persons voted on the two names. Were these voters Apostles? Impossible, for earlier and present reasons—the latter indicated by the announcement that Matthias was numbered "with the eleven." If so, there were over one hundred persons present who voted for an Apostle, although not in any sense of ministerial or official rank; and supposing the Apostles to represent what some term the clergy and others term the bishops, we have over a hundred lay persons, men and women, voting in an "ecclesiastical deliberation" in circumstances of unique solemnity, and as the first corporate act of the Church after the Ascension of Christ! If the "province of the spiritualty" had any existence, even in the shadowy region of conception, St. Peter would have restricted the voting to the ten. He did not; and if not, why not?

Doctrine of the first order was involved in the historical fact, fresh in the minds of those present, and essential as qualifying for apostleship. Upon this, as one point influencing all the electors, the decision turned. Upon it at least a hundred persons had and expressed an opinion, connected, too, with the most solemn ecclesiastical election the Church has ever

known. If these unordained disciples were right, the reservation of doctrine as the province of what is (erroneously) termed the "spiritualty" is unhistorical and unscriptural.

But, it may be urged, this incident was before the Effusion. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the creation of the Holy Catholic Church as the order of the articles in the Constantinopolitan Creed bears witness. For this reference we are thankful, since there is not in the sacred Scripture a more pregnant page than the second chapter of the Acts. We may well term it "the all" chapter. Thirteen* times over that comprehensive word occurs in this chapter. It is as if the historian felt that by the Holy Ghost the absent Christ was in touch with all place, with all flesh, and with all time. The gift was predicted by Joel. The prediction ripened into history at Pentecost, and while the official ministry of the Apostles took its designed, leading, and fitting place, the illuminating blessing was shared by all. The apostolic ministry was a ministry of order, of power, of authority. There were, thus early, those who ministered and those who were ministered to; but the heavenly gift was bestowed upon both, and upon men and women alike; and the right which had been exercised in electing a twelfth Apostle, before Pentecost, was again exercised, and by a much larger number after it, in electing the Seven to what we term "the Diaconate."†

The Electing of the Seven.

* Acts ii. 1, 2, 4, 7, 12, 14, 17, 36, 39, 44, 45.

† The seven are nowhere in Holy Scripture termed deacons.

This election, necessitated by the numerical strength of the Church and by new administrative difficulties, reveals a commanding personality—St. Stephen, the proto-martyr. His life and death were a crisis in the history of the Divine Society. The persecution that burst upon the centre, Jerusalem, dispersed the congregation throughout Judæa and Samaria. The Apostles alone remained in the holy city. But the scattered adherents "went everywhere preaching the Word." The range of their evangelization was wide. It included the coast-line for about 120 miles along the shores of the Mediterranean to the north of Judæa. The vastness and variety of the range over which the victims of this dispersion travelled, and everywhere evangelizing, indicates their extraordinary power of initiative, emphatically so when we remember their separation from the Apostles, who were still at Jerusalem. They were beyond all debate what we would now term "laymen." They were outside the ranks of the official ministry. How did the Head of the Church regard their work and utilize their spiritual gifts? The historian tells us. Three grand assurances of His approval are recorded: "The hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord."* These laymen founded the most vigorous and fertile church in apostolic history. Their work is immortalized by the disciples being first designated Christians in Antioch, and by other characteristics which are specialised in the apostolic record.

Lay Evangelistic work during this dispersion.

* Acts xi. 21.

This incident is accentuated because of the nature of the work God permitted them to originate and which He was pleased to own. It was evangelistic, and, being so, it is essentially doctrinal. It is, in the nature of the case, impossible for any man to be an evangelist, and to receive the approval of God, who is ignorant of, or who even understates or overstates, "the truth as it is in Jesus." Truth is one kind of "the fruit of the spirit," and the passages in which Holy Scripture connects the inception, nutriment, invigoration, and discipline of spiritual life with truth crowd upon the memory. But the propagation of spiritual truth requires capacity, and the moral and mental power to discriminate between doctrine that is false and doctrine that is true. Evangelization has to operate upon ignorance, upon intelligence, upon prejudice, and upon error. The evangelist, clerical and lay alike, must, in the condition of his enterprise, deal with each, and with the incidence of truth upon each.

The first Council of the Church.

Much of this, if not all of this, may be admitted, without showing or proving that the laity had any voice in New Testament times in assemblies where the main work was the definition of Christian doctrine. For this, all that has been urged is preparatory. We now come to what is regarded as the first Council in the Christian Church, held well within the second generation, in Jerusalem, under the presidency of James, the Lord's brother. The matter in dispute was one of life or death. Gentile converts, who

knew nothing of circumcision as a sign of a covenant, as the initial rite of a creed, as involving ceremonial and sacrificial obligations, were taught that salvation through faith in Jesus Christ was impossible unless it was accompanied by circumcision. This involved the observance of the whole law, and it subvested the doctrine of justification by faith. The Church at Antioch determined to appeal to the Church at Jerusalem, and Paul, Barnabas, Titus, and others were despatched "unto the Apostles and elders about this question." On their arrival at the holy city, "they were received of the Church, and of the Apostles and elders"—a sentence which indirectly shows that the historian regarded "the Church" as consisting of others than the "Apostles and elders." The sentence is in open conflict and contrast with any theory or any phraseology which regards the clergy as the Church. Its voice is all the other way. To the Apostles and elders and "the Church" they declared, in accordance with what appears to have been their instinct, "all things that God had done with them." This rehearsal assumes the capacity of those to whom it was made to understand and appreciate not only God's dealings and God's doings, but the doctrine through which all was done.

Presence and action of the laity.

The formal proceedings of the Council begin with the sixth verse, and although the question was referred to the Apostles and elders, that those we should designate "laity" were present

is undoubted. The addresses of St. Peter and, later on, that of St. James, imply it. "Men and brethren" is a far wider appellation than would be used if only Apostles and elders were addressed. This rises to certainty when we read of the presence of "all the multitude" (v. 11). That they spoke is certain, for we are told "there was much discussion" (v. 7). It is also implied by the announcement that they "kept silence" while St. Barnabas and St. Paul "declared what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them" (v. 12). After St. James had spoken, the decision of the Council is given. It is the decision of "the Apostles and elders with the whole Church." It is the voice of the apostolic ministry and of believing laity who were, as we have seen, present, who were consulted, and who ensured the completeness of the spiritual society, in that pregnant act which not only resolved to send envoys to Antioch, but to authorise the circulation of a letter "from the Apostles and elder brethren to the brethren of the Gentiles throughout Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia"—a sentence which used to read as it now runs in the unrevised version, "the Apostles and elders and brethren." This old reading is now surrendered in favour of the latter, but the loss can well be spared. The late Archbishop Benson turned his mental microscope upon this whole chapter. His intellectual keenness was as sharp as his moral candour was beautiful. On this verse he says:—

Archbishop Benson's comment.

"The intrusion of the words 'and the' into the text of the Conciliar letter of Jerusalem, 'the Apostles and the Presbyters

and the Brethren send greeting' show that at the time when they were added, it did not seem so impossible that the laity should have consulted even with the Apostles; that they had in reality been consulted appears from the narrative. *It was determined by the Apostles and the Elders, together with the whole Church*,* unless this is thought to be mere rhetoric."†

Earlier still, Bishop Jacobson, one of the most cautious and careful of commentators, used these words: "The discussion was carried on by the Apostles and elders, but openly, and the decision was accepted by all, laity included; *all were collectively consulted as to the best mode of making the decision known.*"

If we could detach ourselves from the essentially different methods now and for centuries prevalent, we should be surprised by the obvious attitude of the holy Apostles towards the question debated in the Council and towards that of the multitude who took part in the "much disputing."‡ This surprise begins when we remember what the Apostles might have done. It increases when we see what they did. St. Peter from the first took a leading position. It was on his initiative the vacancy in the apostolic body was filled, and, with the single exception of the seventh chapter of the Acts containing Stephen's apology, St. Peter is the personal centre around which the historic record moves in the first twelve chapters of St. Luke's history. To him alone of the Apostles is vouchsafed the vision which by abolishing distinctions in food, abolished distinctions between Jew and

* Acts xv. 22.

† Cyprian, 427.

‡ Acts xv. 7.

Gentile.* How St. Peter understood this is clear from his visit and message to Cornelius. Barnabas and Paul had entered on their missionary journey, and we know they were empowered to work miracles. They had reported to the "whole Church" the success of their enterprise. They had accentuated the opening of the door of faith unto the Gentiles. They prolonged their stay with the disciples in the centre now disturbed by the Judaizers. It would be rash, unreasonable, and contrarient to the normal experience of mankind, to deny to both the weight which is ever accorded to men who work under such conditions. Influence of another kind belongs to James. He was probably changed from wondering incredulity to whole-hearted conviction by the Risen Redeemer. He was the Lord's brother, and we possess sacred words which indicate that he held a position of pre-eminence in the apostolic body. Is it exaggeration to believe that these Apostles, Peter, Barnabas, Paul, and James, individually and cumulatively possessed, though not for quite similar reasons, great influence, if not authority? If they did, is it not remarkable, and even suggestive, that they seemed to adopt a line which was in the direction of self-effacement? St. Peter, quite conscious of the Divine origin of his ministry, is quite unconscious of the exercise of authority. His language is that of appeal, of remonstrance, of persuasion. St. James's is that of exposition. His reference is to what God has revealed in Holy Scripture. But it is as

* Acts x. 28.

little that of concentrated authority as is that of St. Peter. This is the more remarkable because of the fact that if ever there was a case in which the authoritative declaration of the Apostles alone would have been justified it was this; and had they been regarded as the "spiritualty," and had "faith" been considered as their "province," there is no reason why they should not have decided the point themselves. But had they done so it would have been at the cost of the recognition of the primary authority of the whole Church, involving, probably, the re-opening of the question in another place and at a later time. It would have made an exception to the position and to the privileges of the unordained, so far as the New Testament has made us acquainted with their nature and their number. The unordained had elected a twelfth Apostle; they had chosen the Seven; they had founded the very Church which was distraught by this heresy, menaced by this schism, and in which God had owned, in an emphatic way, the spiritual gifts expressed in lay evangelization. But the Apostles did not exercise such authority as is now claimed for the "spiritualty." They rather submitted to the whole assembly, under Divine guidance, common to all, such considerations as corresponded to the right of their hearers, as were likely to influence their exercise, as tended to secure unanimity and finality, and which, in fact, secured both. The fact is, exclusiveness of official authority in matters of faith is not known to St. Paul: "Not that we

Attitude of the Apostles.

have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand."* That this position was accepted by St. Peter and St. John is indisputable.†

The Magna Charta of the laity.

This incident, conserved in the Acts of the Apostles, may be regarded as the spiritual Magna Charta of the laity.‡ It recognizes their right to appear, to speak, to vote, in any assembly of the Church, and on matters of faith, vital or fundamental. To the ordained leaders of the Church may be remitted the compilation of the results at which the assembly have arrived. But to the laity belong, as members of the body of Christ, baptized, confirmed communicants, taught by the same Holy Spirit that created the Holy Catholic Church, the right to speak, to vote, and to suggest the best means for circulating such decrees as they and the ministers of the Church may decide.

Position of laity in later Councils.

This claim is to be urged now, as against a much narrower and a very much lower one. It is justified; it is illustrated; it is, in many and various ways, reinforced by the history of the sub-apostolic Church for centuries. That the laity had an essential place in the administration of discipline is proved by the first Epistle to the Corinthians. That they possessed elective rights in the appointment of presbyters and of bishops appears from literature, the genuineness of which no one challenges, and the

* 2 Cor. i. 24.

† 1 Pet. v. 12; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

‡ It is suggestive, and even surprising, that the second of the Essays on "Church Reform," edited by Canon Gore, and entitled "The Position of the Laity in the Early Church," contains no reference whatever to Acts xv.!

evidential value of which most men recognize. The Didache, the Epistle of St. Clement, and implicitly, the Ignatian letters, tell the same truth; while the letters of Cyprian are clear and cogent on the same features of the Church of God in the West. If Ignatius said "nothing without the bishop," Cyprian said "nothing without the laity." Addressing the presbyters and deacons of Carthage, he says, and that on a subject involving alike doctrine and discipline: "I could give you no reply at all by myself, for from the first outset of my episcopate I resolved to transact nothing on my own private judgment without your counsel and without the consent of the laity."*

Conclusion as to position of laity in the Early Church.

The evidence of the Conciliar period is in the same direction. The Council of Nice, 325, was summoned by Constantine the Great. Its deliberations were conducted under his presidency, even though he was at the time unbaptized. The Council of Constantinople, 381, was called by the Emperor Theodosius the Elder to appease the doctrinal and schismatical troubles of the East. The Council of Ephesus, 431, was assembled by the Emperor Theodosius the Younger to determine the Nestorian controversy; and the Council of Chalcedon, 451, was called by the Emperor Marcian. Later Councils, held at Constantinople, Nice, and Sardica, bring us up to the middle of the ninth century, and these were convened not by episcopal or papal, but by imperial, and, therefore, by lay, authority.

* Ep. xiv. 4. (quoted by Archbishop Benson, Cyprian, p. 429).

How far laymen were allowed to go is by no means as clear as it is in the account we have of the Council at Jerusalem. The probability is their spiritual rights were abridged as clerical rights were increased and expanded. But the testimony of Cyprian is clear and reiterated. It shows that the most ecclesiastically-minded of bishops not only consulted the laity on matters involving doctrine and discipline, but said he would not act without them. The order of a Council at Toledo, 633, shows that "chosen laymen" were invited to join in consultation, and earlier still, at the Council of Orange, 529, lay members signed the conclusions agreed upon. Lay signatures are also found at the Council of Calcythe, 787. Let it be granted that the literature of the earlier centuries is, on this point, scanty and uncertain; that considerable doubt exists as to the constituent members necessary to a Council of the Church, as well as to the part and order of each in speaking, in voting, and in subscribing. There is, it is submitted, ample evidence in our hands to prove conclusively that the definition of doctrine is no specialty of the ordained; that the laity had a voice in its affirmation and publication in apostolic times, and if this be so, their exclusion from the exercise of that spiritual right is unhistorical; it maims the spiritual symmetry of the spiritual body; it weakens its corporate authority; it ignores the multiplied injunctions of Holy Scripture addressed to the laity to advance the Kingdom of Christ; "to admonish

one another"; "to warn the unruly"; "to exhort each other"; to "comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men," and "to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints." If these passages do not involve the spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost to the laity and their rights to deal with doctrine, in working out its most beautiful functions, and in proving that the ordained hold no heavenly patent for its definition and promulgation, it is difficult to know what they do teach.

This paper may well be closed with the words of a very cautious and original investigator who has recently been called to higher service in a purer scene than this. Speaking of the organization of the Church of Christ, the late Professor Hort says: "Nothing, perhaps, has been more prominent in our examination of the Ecclesiæ of the apostolic age than the fact that the Ecclesia itself, *i.e.*, apparently the sum of all its male adult members, is the primary body, and it would seem, even the primary authority. It may be that this state of things was in some way a mark of immaturity; and that a better and riper organization must, of necessity, involve the creation of more special organs of the community. Still, the very origin and fundamental nature of the Ecclesia as a community of disciples renders it impossible that the principle should rightly become obsolete. In a word, we cannot properly speak of an organization of a community from which the greater part of its

members are excluded. The true way, the apostolic way, of regarding offices or officers in the Ecclesia is to regard them as organs of its corporate life for special purposes; so that the offices of an Ecclesia at any period are only a part of its organization."*

* The Episcopal Churches in Ireland and abroad have found it impossible to exclude the laity from the free discussion of all subjects. In the early days of the American Episcopal Church, it was some time before, *e.g.* Connecticut, admitted the laity to full rights of Debate (McConnell's "History of the Episcopal Church in America," p. 266). In Ireland, in 1869, a preliminary proposal to reserve questions of faith and discipline for the clergy alone was rejected at once, and not afterwards raised (Gore "Essays," p. 356).

In New Zealand the general synod is to consist of three orders—bishops, clergy, and laity, "the consent of all of which orders shall be necessary to all acts binding upon the synod" (Constitution Fundamental Provisions, I. 5). So in Australia the general synod consists of two Houses, Bishops and Representatives (clerical and lay). "Both Houses shall sit together for deliberation and transaction of business, but shall on all occasions vote separately," no subjects being reserved for the clergy. Similarly in Canada, full freedom of discussion is allowed the laity (see Prof. Cody's Essay). So far as I am aware, the Scotch Episcopal Church alone withdraws "doctrine, worship and discipline" from the powers of the laity: Canon XLV. of 1876. The Canterbury Convocation has resolved that nothing in the scheme for the House of Laymen "shall be held to impair the right of this Sacred Synod to pronounce finally for the Province on all questions of faith and doctrine." As an instance of the absurd difficulties which inevitably result from any attempt at such a division, it may be noted that the Chairman, on one occasion, ruled a motion dealing with the law of Divorce out of order as likely to touch on matters of doctrine.

All writers are agreed on the moderating, steadying influence of the lay element. Experience in the Irish Church, for instance, even bearing in mind the fierce Revision debates, is that "a better humoured body never met," and that the discussions "have led to a wonderful diffusion of information and softening of party spirit" (Gore "Essays," p. 364). The lay element is also the most Conservative. To secure the advantage of the presence of the laity in debate it is essential, while the right of voting by orders is reserved, that the lay and clerical representatives should sit together with the fullest liberty of discussion for both.—ED.

THE LAY FRANCHISE.

By Montague Barlow, LL.D., M.A.

Official Principal to the Archdeacon of London.

Difficulty of the question.

The question of the lay franchise is at present the most difficult which those who advocate reform have to face: it is hardly too much to say that if this difficulty were solved the Church could secure a proper system of autonomy to-morrow. Parliament generally is loath to consent to any reform in Church matters so long as Churchmen themselves are divided as to what shape that reform is to take, and especially is this true in a case like the present, where the difficulty involves the very essence of the relation of the Church to the State.*

It may be as well to state first what the proposals at present before the public are.

Existing Lay representation.

We have even now in our Church a system, though only a voluntary one, involving the choice of lay delegates: the two Lay Houses of Canterbury and York consist of representatives chosen by the lay members of the various Diocesan Conferences, who, in their turn, are chosen by the ruri-decanal conferences, the latter being commissioned by the parochial

* I have assumed throughout this paper that that relation is to be preserved. Disestablishment may be forced on us; we should be worse than foolish to demand it.

vestries. If any proper machinery is constituted by Parliament for securing lay representation in Convocation, it will naturally proceed on these lines, that is to say, the election would not be direct, as for our own House of Commons, but indirect, as in the case of American Federal Senators, who are chosen, not directly by the people themselves, but by the Senates of the various States.

Electors and elected.

That being so, we have obviously two classes of persons to consider, the primary or outside fringe of electors, and the ascending scale of lay delegates through whom, as it were, the process of election filters.

The elected Delegates.

Most Church reformers who agree about nothing else are united in admitting a difference between these two classes—that while a strict Church qualification, communicant or other, should be required for the delegates themselves, the wider range of the electorate should begin on a broader basis. It is, however, not by any means everyone who is prepared even to grant this.

For instance, when the Joint Committee of the Houses of Laymen reported on the representation of the laity in July, 1900, Lord Halifax expressly refused to accept this distinction, though it was adopted by the rest of the Committee. The rest of the Committee were unanimous that a distinction should be drawn; and first that, following the rule in the Irish, Canadian, and other Episcopal Churches, the *elected delegates* should always be communi-

cants; as to this point practically everyone is agreed, so it need not detain us further.

Further, they did not propose to allow women to be chosen as delegates, and this, again, is the unanimous verdict of Church experience and Church feeling.

Finally, the Committee adopted a wider basis than the communicant test for the electors, and here, of course, all the difficulty begins.* The electors.

The types of franchise or qualification suggested for the electors are mainly five, as follows:—

(*a*) *Communicant Qualification.* — In his "Essays on Church Reform," Canon Gore, now Bishop of Worcester, insisted on this. "I think the best answer or the only answer in accordance with really Christian principles is that all should be in this sense accepted as laymen with the right of laymen, who, being baptized and confirmed, are also communicants in the Church, thus continuing in the fellowship and the breaking of the bread."† In the discussions at the autumnal meetings of the Diocesan Conferences, many who in other points would take

* The Committee consisted of Lords Cross, Halifax, Feversham, Egerton, Mr. Wharton, M.P., and Sir F. Powell, M.P. (York.); and Lords Ashcombe and Cranborne, Sir J. Kennaway, M.P., Mr. Shaw Stewart, Mr. P. V. Smith, and Mr. J. G. Talbot, M.P. (Canterbury).—Report, published by National Society, p. 7.

The minority who advocated the ratepayer qualification at the same time agreed that delegates should be communicants. —Page 9.

† *Essays on Church Reform*, 1898, p. 24. It is only fair to add that the Bishop has since modified his views in favour of the Baptism and Confirmation test.

a more moderate position than the Bishop, were willing to accept this test.*

(*b*) *Baptism and Confirmation.*—Many who think a pure and simple communicant test improper and likely to lead to scandal, as in the case of the Test Acts, would yet hold no one entitled to vote for the election of Church delegates who had not only been baptized into the Church, but had also voluntarily taken up his duties as a Churchman on attaining "years of discretion." This is the view advocated by the Dean of Norwich in this volume.

(*c*) *Baptism alone.*—Advocates of (*a*) and (*b*) have their eyes fixed on the Church and her requirements but seem to forget the great fact of establishment altogether and the connection with the State. The test of Baptism, either alone or with an adherency qualification, would go much further towards including the nation at large than either (*a*) or (*b*); by the law of the Church, lay Baptism administered by Dissenters is valid, provided the proper words of invocation are used†, so that by this test, apart from an adherency qualification, Jews and professed Agnostics would have no vote, but the majority of Nonconformists would.

(*d*) *Simple Declaration of Church Membership.*—This, either with or without an adherency or residential qualification, is the test imposed in the Episcopal Church of Ireland and very

* See an article on the Lay Franchise, *Church Quarterly*, January, 1902.

† Escott *v.* Mastin (1842), 4 Moo., P.C. 104.

generally in various dioceses of Canada, Australia, and America. It has the obvious advantage of depending primarily on the volition of each individual. The qualification sounds vague. Who is to test whether a man's declaration is true or not? All one can say is that the objection is not, in fact, felt in the countries where this rule exists; nor is the test in England an unknown one. Even now, Churchwardens are, by certain acts, required to be "members of the Church of England,"* and a declaration of membership is demanded of the Judge appointed under the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, and no special machinery is provided for testing the truth in either case.†

The majority of the Joint Committee whose report has already been referred to, required that "the electors shall be such of the persons qualified to meet in vestry as are lay members of the Church of England." This leaves open the question of what Church membership is, or how it is to be ascertained: probably it was intended that, *primâ facie*, at any rate, any person declaring himself a member of the Church of England should be treated as such.

(*e*) *The existing Ratepaying Qualification.*—Lords Cross, Ashcombe, Feversham, and Egerton of Tatton, in their Minority Report before mentioned, declared: "We entirely dissent from the paragraph which requires Church member-

* 1-2 Will. IV., c. 38, Sec. 25; 6-7 Vict., c. 37, Sec. 17.

† Of course, recourse could be had, in the last resort, to the Courts, *e.g.*, if an ex-communicate person made this declaration a prohibition could issue.

ship as a qualification for an elector at a vestry meeting. The Church of England is the National Church, and in our opinion every member of the vestry is entitled to vote as an elector"; and a similar resolution was adopted by the Northern House* of Laymen, though only by a small majority.

Since Sturges Bourne's Act of 1819, any inhabitant possessing sufficient property, whether he be Roman Catholic, Jew, or Agnostic, is qualified to vote in the ordinary Church Vestry;† and the argument is strongly pressed that the Church, so long as she is established, is the Church of the Nation at large; it is true that whatever test be accepted, no one would thereby restrict the work of the Church. The clergy would still minister to all who came, whoever voted in the Vestry. But it is urged that to set up any exclusive standard for the Vestry is, in fact, much the same as saying to everyone else, "You are not legally members of the Church"; is, in fact, to turn the Church into one among many sects, and to knock the bottom out of the principle of an Established Church.

Such are the possibilities. Which do the majority of Churchmen prefer?

* 8th May, 1901. The York House of Laymen have now decided to reconsider this vote. *Guardian*, April 9th, 1902.

† The property qualification was one vote for property rated under £50, with additional votes up to six for every complete £25 of property up to £150. Sturges Bourne's Act has recently been abolished in London by schemes under the new London Government Act, 1899, but the qualification for voting in the ecclesiastical vestry is still a property one, though the cumulative vote is gone.

Before discussing this issue, it is well to bear in mind one or two points. In the first place, it will probably in the end make very little difference in actual practice what qualification is taken; even in Churches like the American, where the lines of the franchise are widely drawn*, it is, in fact, only the keen Churchmen, men who could answer to any test, who take interest and exercise their vote; and if this is true of the primary elections, still less will the qualification affect the ultimate result here, owing to the fact mentioned above that the lay delegates to the Church's Parliament will be chosen, not directly by the electors, but indirectly by intermediate bodies; it is the Churchmen of leading, whatever their party, who will always make their appearance in the House of Laymen.

Next it is clear that, from one point of view, any claim of those who are not Churchmen—of Nonconformists or Agnostics—to the Franchise is illogical and indefensible: Churchmen have no right to interfere in the management of chapels or synagogues. Why grant the reverse? And the argument is pressed very keenly as a matter of principle by High Churchmen, who urge that to admit an *omnium gatherum* of all sects to vote for the Church's assemblies is to destroy the whole basis of a visible Church, and would be, in fact, little short of impious.

* In some American States—*e.g.*, New York—owing to the pressure of Statute Law, the qualification for membership consists simply in regular attendance at worship, together with contribution to the support of the Church for twelve months previously.—Bayles' Civil Church Law, p. 56.

Franchise distinct from Membership.

It is, however, rapidly becoming clearer as the discussion proceeds that what we have to settle is not the question of membership, but of franchise; not who are Churchmen, but what body shall be entrusted with the vote. All men, women, and children in the United Kingdom are British subjects, and they number forty-one millions; but only six millions have a Parliamentary vote. The franchise is entirely distinct from nationality.

On this point the precedents furnished by non-established Churches in the Colonies, America, and elsewhere, are interesting, but not of much real value, for the fact of establishment in England renders comparison impossible. With these Churches membership and franchise are generally synonymous terms.

State choice of the Church's Executive.

There is no doubt that at first it will not be easy to persuade Parliament to grant the right to choose the Church delegates to any body of electors which does not represent the people of England as a whole.* Nor is this altogether unnatural; as it is, alike in England and in other countries with an establishment, the State claims a large, if not an absolute, voice in nominating the chief executive officers of the Church. If Churchmen can tolerate this, why, it will be urged, should they be aggrieved if the nation claims a small voice in nominating the Church's legislature? The Prime Minister, as representing the party in power, appoints the Bishops, his

* See, on the whole question, reply of Archbishops to Deputation, Feb., 1901.

choice being, in fact, limited to this extent, that he must select leading Churchmen; but equally if the selection of Church delegates be in the hands of a national electorate the process of indirect representation, together with the strong Church qualification for delegates, would ensure the ultimate choice of leading Churchmen for the Laymen's House. In neither case could the secular power choose obviously improper or unworthy persons: it could only select from among qualified Churchmen those most in accord with the national life in its widest aspects.

Church electorate preferable.

Personally, I should prefer for the electorate some wide form of Church qualification; and it is useful here to remember how high it has been found possible to raise the test in the Episcopal Churches in Ireland, the Colonies, and America.

Qualification in Colonies, &c.

The Irish Church admits to a vote every male over twenty-one who makes a declaration of membership and either owns property or resides in the parish, or has regularly attended the Church. The South African limit is equally wide, *i.e.*, every male over twenty-one who, "being baptised, and not being a member of any other religious body, is an habitual worshipper in the Church in respect of which he claims to vote." Of 14 Australian Dioceses, 11 require a personal declaration of Church membership, together with either habitual worshipping or residence, 2 excluding females. The rule is somewhat more lax in America. Of 35 Dioceses, only 12 require a personal declaration of membership, while 16 accept habitual

worshipping, with or without residence, as sufficient; 13 exclude females. In the 6 New Zealand Dioceses, the qualification is uniform, viz., a declaration, together with residence, females being excluded. So of 15 fully-constituted Canadian Dioceses, 11 accept a declaration with the additional qualification of worshipping or residence, 4, however, requiring a communicant test as well; females are admitted to vote in only 4 Dioceses. The Scotch Episcopal Church, on the other hand, is exceptional, and only admits adult Communicants, including females, to the vote.*

Consensus of opinion.

It is clear, therefore, that the consensus of experience in English-speaking Episcopal Churches is generally in favour of a Church declaration being sufficient, provided the voter can by some means prove a real connection with the parish. As to the admission of females, opinions appear to be about equally divided. It will be hardly feasible, even if it were advisable, to secure a more rigid test in England, with its Established Church, than has been found possible in the free Churches abroad. Probably in the end the most satisfactory solution will be found to be that adopted in effect at† the Manchester Diocesan Conference last Autumn, and by the Joint Committee of the two Houses of Laymen, viz., a property, that is, a householder

* See Report of Self-Government Enquiry Committee of House of Laymen of Canterbury, May, 1901.

† See *Record*, Friday, November 1st, 1901, p. 1076, where the resolutions of the Diocesan Conferences last Autumn are summarised.

qualification of a wide kind, thus securing local connection of either residence or occupation, and admitting a certain, but not overwhelming number of women; and to impose in addition a declaration of Church membership.

The House of Laymen of Canterbury, however, on January 31st, 1902, adopted the following as the electorate, viz.: "Such persons of full age, resident in the ecclesiastical parish or district, as declare themselves in writing to be members of the Church of England, and of no other religious body, and are not legally and actually excluded from the Communion, and are of the male sex."*

The rejection of any property qualification, of course, carried with it at once the absolute exclusion of women, who would otherwise have swamped the male voters entirely. Lord Hugh Cecil, to whom the words "legally and actually excluded" are due, explained that he wished to adopt the Confirmation test; the actual words, however, do not appear to do this, for they would allow an unconfirmed Churchman to exercise a vote unless actually and, in fact, he had been forbidden to come to the Communion.

The whole qualification, as Mr. R. W. Dibdin pointed out, is complicated, and the compilation of a list of such electors would be a work of the greatest difficulty. The matter remains to be discussed with a committee of the York laymen, and it is very doubtful how far the Canterbury

* *Record*, January 31st, 1902, p. 113.

Course for the future.

resolution expresses the opinion of the Northern Province or of the laity at large.

In the end, probably the only way to arrive at a conclusion will be for the Archbishops, when the matter has been somewhat more thrashed out throughout the kingdom, to summon a Voluntary Convention of leading laity and clergy from all parts of the country, and take a definite vote. This was the method adopted with the best results by the Irish Church in 1869, and by the American Church in 1785. When the Church has thus expressed her voice, every effort must be made to get Parliament to adopt the solution arrived at.

Meanwhile, the more discussion and ventilation of the problem in all its bearings the better. The one thing to be avoided is a *non possumus* attitude, the insistence on this or that literal form of qualification as a matter of principle, the nailing of colours to the ratepayers' or any other mast; the eventual and final form of solution can only be beaten out white hot on the anvil of national discussion and under the pressure of all the forces of the Church and of the State.

EVANGELICAL CHURCHMEN AND MODERN CHURCH DEVELOPMENTS.

By Eugene Stock.

In this paper it is proposed to present a brief sketch of the attitude, during the past half century, of Evangelical Churchmen towards the successive developments of Church life and organization which have marked that period. From such a retrospect of the past we may obtain important suggestions for the direction of our policy in the present and the future.

In the earlier years of the nineteenth century, the established position of the Church of England in connexion with the State, as being, in effect, the State in its ecclesiastical aspect, was much more prominent in the thoughts of Churchmen generally than it is now. The ordinary phrase used in mentioning the Church in sermons and speeches was "our happy Establishment," in which phrase the word "Establishment" meant, not a certain condition of the Church, but the Church itself. Its use was pre-eminently common among the "high and dry" clergy who toasted "Church and King" and hated "Popery and Dissent" with equal vehemence. It was the Evangelicals of those days who, while thoroughly loyal to the Establishment, realized, to some extent at least,

the spiritual status of the Visible Church; it was they who, by the pen of Joseph Milner, traced its continuity from the beginning and dwelt lovingly upon the characters and careers of the holy men of even the darkest periods of mediæval superstition; it was they who, while proud of the Reformation, went back to the early Fathers for precedents when planning for their infant Missionary Society a scheme for the employment of "catechists"; and it was they who, to satisfy the high Tory Bishops of the period that the said Missionary Society was not disloyal to the Crown and the Constitution, had to plead that its objects had "received the sanction of Parliament"!—referring to the revised East India Charter.

At the same time, it is quite true that our Evangelical fathers were so filled with the desire for the salvation of individual souls that the life of the Church as a corporate body was but little considered by them. This was not unnatural, considering their fewness in number, their total lack of influence in leading Church circles, the irreligious condition of the people among whom they worked, and the claim upon their spare thoughts and energies of such philanthropic movements as those for the abolition of slavery, the improvement of prisons, etc. The idea of the Church of England as a Branch of the Visible Church Catholic (whatever that may be held to include), having an independent status quite apart from the accident of establishment, scarcely existed in those days. That it has since

become so widely prevalent is undoubtedly due, in the main, to the Oxford Movement; but it owes not a little also to the opening of the doors of civil offices to Dissenters, and of Parliament to Roman Catholics, Jews, and Atheists; and not a little, likewise, to the success of the disestablished Church of Ireland and of the non-established Churches in the Colonies, which has led an Australian Bishop, noted for his epigrammatic incisiveness, to boast that the Anglican Church has girdled the earth, though "established" only in "South Britain." Not that Churchmen generally—certainly not Evangelical Churchmen—are in the least shaken in their belief in the principle of the union of Church and State. On the contrary, any serious attack upon Establishment would unite parties as nothing else would in resistance to it. But the belief, sincere as it is, does not, as once it did, almost amount to idolatry. Moreover, it is beginning to be understood that the corporate life of a Church and its self-government within due limits are in no way inconsistent with Establishment. This is amply proved by the case of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; while the possibilities of flourishing Church life independently of the State are illustrated in Ireland, in the Colonies, and in the United States.

Here it may be remarked that when the early Tractarians joined the Dissenters in reproaching the Evangelicals for regarding the Queen as "Head of the Church," the charge was warmly repudiated by Hugh Stowell, of Manchester, the

leading Protestant orator of those days. "She is supreme," he said at the Church Pastoral Aid Anniversary in 1851, "over all *causes* ecclesiastical; but she is not Head of the Church. That title," he went on, "was arrogated by Henry VIII., who was neither more nor less than a Pope himself. He died a Papist. We give him over to Rome: he belongs to her, not to us. But Queen Elizabeth refused the title. 'It belongs,' she said, 'to none but Christ Himself.'" "My friends," exclaimed Stowell, "we would never give the Queen, much as we love and revere her, the title of Head of the Church. The Lord Jesus Christ alone is our Head!"*

But while the theory of the corporate life of the Visible Church was propounded sixty years ago chiefly by the Tractarians, its revival in actual practice was more due to the Evangelicals than is commonly supposed; for it began with the Bishops, that is to say, it began with the setting up of a higher standard of episcopal work than had previously prevailed, and this was a fruit of the higher standard of ministerial life raised by the Evangelical clergy, which showed itself not merely in fervent preaching, but in developments like the early Communions, and evening and week-day services, and singing of the canticles and of hymns, introduced by the first Daniel Wilson at Islington. Moreover, the Bishops who exemplified in their own person the new activity of the Episcopate were the Evangelical Bishops Ryder and the Sumners; and

* Quoted in the "Missionary Register," 1851, p. 372.

also Samuel Wilberforce at Oxford and Longley at Ripon, both of whom were at first closely allied with the Evangelicals. Blomfield was almost the only one of the new type of active Bishop who cannot be so reckoned.

One of the first signs of the awakened Church feeling was the establishment of the Colonial Bishopries Fund in 1841, and it was a grant of £600 a year from the Church Missionary Society that enabled the first bishopric proposed to become a *fait accompli* within six months. About the same time, the old office of rural dean was revived, and ruri-decanal meetings began to be held. The scattered Evangelical clergy had been so long accustomed to the cold shoulder from their official superiors, and therefore so used to meet only by themselves, that they did not at once appreciate this movement; but Josiah Pratt, then almost the last survivor of the generation of Scott and Simeon, welcomed it "as the beginning of more effective Church organization."

Then, in the second year of the second half of the century, 1852, came the revival of Convocation, after being suppressed for one hundred and thirty years. Now, although it is true that the Evangelicals took no part in this movement, it is equally true that their most instructed leaders were quite conscious that the Church without its Convocations was without a legitimate voice of its own. No man held a higher position among them than Francis Close, of Cheltenham, afterwards Dean of Carlisle; and

what did Close say? Preaching the Annual C.M.S. Sermon in 1841, he repelled the accusation that the Society presumed to "*send forth*" missionaries—an ecclesiastical act which, he said, no voluntary association could properly do. "The Church," he added, "alone can send out missionaries; ours are not commissioned by a Committee, whether Lay or Clerical: they are sent forth by the Bishops of the Anglican Church." The very existence of voluntary societies, he explained, was due to the fact of the Church having no official representative body. "We, alas! are in such a situation in the Church of England that we cannot move as a Church: we have no Synod; we have no Convocation; we have no General Assembly." Henry Venn also, in the famous "Appendix" which for forty years appeared in every C.M.S. Report, vindicated his Society from certain charges by urging that "if the Church were to assemble in her Provincial Convocations and to decree and regulate missionary operations," she would practically have to act very much as the Society was acting, and "nothing less than the sanction of a duly-assembled Convocation" could identify the acts of any Society with the Church. *The Christian Observer*, too, then the weightiest Evangelical organ, laid down (October, 1852) the great principle that "National Establishment does not require the obliteration of the Church's spiritual functions."

But principles are apt to give way under the pressure of circumstances. Before 1852 arrived, the secession of Newman and Manning, the Gorham case, the Papal Aggression, and the beginning of modern Ritualism at St. Barnabas', Pimlico, had thoroughly alarmed the now numerous and powerful Evangelical party; and the proposal to revive Convocation was vehemently opposed by the majority of its members. Not, however, by the more thoughtful. John Cunningham, of Harrow, who had lately become editor of *The Christian Observer*, said (September, 1854), "We are anxious rather to wait in hope than precipitately to condemn." Lord Shaftesbury was one of the strongest opponents of "a clerical Parliament," but he publicly disclaimed opposition to a Church Synod or Assembly in which the laity should have a large share of influence. Mr. Gladstone, in a remarkable letter dated November 8th, 1852, had appealed to him to co-operate in measures to obtain a "corporate organization" including the laity, and the disclaimer which the Earl put forth just a week later was evidently a response to this appeal. Mr. Gladstone had urged the incompetence of Parliament to do for the Church what the Church needed for the effective accomplishment of its work for the nation. "The utmost," he said, "we can hope for from Parliament is the occasional adoption of a measure for the repression of some positive abuse or for the better husbanding of the pecuniary resources of the Church: both of

these good, but neither of them going to the root of the evil." * True words, indeed! and truer still to-day!

In the same letter Mr. Gladstone referred to efforts he was making to obtain some sort of autonomy for the Colonial Churches, then beginning to need it sorely, and complained that he was opposed in the House of Commons by those who were likely to be in sympathy with Lord Shaftesbury. He also wrote long letters to Mr. Venn, which are extant, but have never been published. The political autonomy of the Colonies was at this time being given them, and the Colonial Churches no less required emancipation from the strict control of Downing Street. The various schemes, however, for bestowing ecclesiastical self-government were strongly opposed by the Evangelical party, for fear that they should lead to Episcopal Autocracy. But Episcopal Autocracy was the very thing that these schemes were designed to prevent or suppress. Bishop Perry, of Melbourne, whose staunch Evangelicalism was above suspicion, complained of the autocratic power he possessed, saying that men of good standing in England would not go out to spheres in which they were subject to the will of an individual.† The Evangelicals at home, however, especially their leading lawyers, suspected anything that was promoted by Bishops

* "Life of the Earl of Shaftesbury," Vol. II., pp. 404-407.

† "Life of Bishop Selwyn," Vol. II., p. 88.

Wilberforce, Selwyn, and Gray; and it is a humbling recollection that the *Record* of those days strenuously supported a man of Lord Westbury's reputation rather than join High Church Bishops in getting a thing good in itself. However, the Colonial Churches, in various ways which there is not space to indicate here, eventually obtained the desired freedom; and the laity obtained a power in their administration which Evangelical Churchmen ought to have been proud to have a share in securing for them. The first regular Ecclesiastical Synod with legislative and executive power, and with lay members in strong force, met at Melbourne in 1856 under the presidency of Bishop Perry.

In all the self-governing Colonies the Church now administers its own affairs, and the laymen take an interest in them which a visitor from England admires and envies. Bishops and clergy and laity work together, not without differences—that could not be expected anywhere,—but with a common desire for the good of the Church, and without interference from outsiders. Evangelicals are in a minority in most dioceses, though not in all; but even where they are a minority, they can work in their own way with freedom, and for the most part the Bishops who do not personally sympathize with them are sensible enough to accord them full recognition. The result, however, might have been attained with more good feeling and less friction if the Evangelical party at home had been more awake to the signs of the times, and

less suspicious of everything initiated by other sections of the Church. When the modern Evangelical, clerical or lay, reads that a Clifford has been consecrated a Bishop at Calcutta, or a Leonard Williams in New Zealand, or a Grisdale in Manitoba, he is glad to know that a C.M.S. missionary has been raised to the Episcopate; but he forgets that the liberty to consecrate them on the field of their labour was only won by High Churchmen in the teeth of Evangelical shortsightedness.

The decade commonly known as "the 'sixties" saw the commencement of three important Church movements, viz., the Church Congress in 1861, Diocesan Conferences in 1864, and the Lambeth Conference in 1867. It is again to be remarked with regret that every one of these was regarded with suspicion by Evangelicals, or at least by those of them who spoke their minds; for it must be remembered that very many of the clergymen and laymen who are most earnest and efficient in direct spiritual work, and who do not sympathize with this invidious attitude, are wont to keep their own counsel. It is true that, from the first, almost all the recognized Evangelical leaders accepted the invitations of the promoters of the Church Congress. In the programmes of the first seven Congresses occur the names of McNeile, Stowell, Ryle, Garbett, Bardsley, Bernard, Cadman, Tristram, Litton, Hoare, and Bickersteth. And they were not present merely for controversial purposes. When it was necessary to

fight, they fought bravely; but they took their full part also in contributing practical papers on "Parochial Work," "Lay Ministrations," "Women's Work," "Education," "Temperance," "Evangelistic Efforts," "Social Questions," etc. Nevertheless, it is equally true that a good many of those who attended did so as a duty and to "contend for the faith" if need be, rather than because they welcomed a movement which in its issues has done perhaps more than any other to increase the practical efficiency of Church work. And all the while, there was a section which denounced the whole thing, and invented the invidious term "Neo-Evangelical" to describe those who followed the lead of "the three Canons," Ryle, Garbett, and Hoare, whose "treachery" to the Protestant cause was the favourite topic of the *Rock* in its earlier days.

Diocesan Conferences never caused so much heart-burning as the Church Congress; but they were dreaded nevertheless by those who disliked anything that brought the actual members of the Church of England together, while in no way objecting to Church affairs being discussed by Nonconformists, Roman Catholics, Jews, and Atheists, in Parliament. The laymen who took seats on the Diocesan Conferences were sneered at as "ecclesiastically-minded"; that is to say, the men who took most interest in Church affairs, and knew most about them, were to be least trusted to discuss them. Of course, these Conferences had, and have, no power. They were, and are, quite different from the

Conferences or Synods of the Colonial Churches; but they at least give the laity an opportunity of expressing their opinion. The first was held at Ely in 1864, the real promoter being Archdeacon Emery, as he had been of the Church Congress. The second was instituted at Lichfield in 1868, Bishop Selwyn, immediately on his succeeding to that See, bringing his Colonial experience to bear upon Church questions at home. Gradually, every diocese copied these examples, London and Worcester being the last. There is no doubt that the Disestablishment of the Irish Church gave an impetus to the movement. The English Church was threatened with like treatment; many feared that the great revolution would really come; and if it did come, would it not be well—so it was thought—for clergy and laity to be already accustomed to meet together as members of the Church and consider its affairs in a friendly way?

The Lambeth Conference met with much more serious opposition. "Broad" and "Low," Dean Stanley and the *Record*, combined against it; and the secular papers laughed it to scorn. It is always a safe thing in some circles to assume that whatever Bishops do must be wrong. If it is asked, "What circles?" it is sufficient to reply, "Extremes meet." In this case, however, some of the Bishops themselves stood aloof, headed by Archbishop Thomson. There were at that time five Bishops of English sees who were counted as decided Evangelicals, and on this question they were divided, three

against two. C. Sumner and Pelham went to Lambeth; Baring, Waldegrave, and R. Bickersteth held aloof. But Evangelical Bishops from the Colonies and America had no scruples, and those who were able to come did come. When the second Lambeth Conference took place in 1878, there were scarcely any abstainers; and since then this great episcopal gathering, which has now been held four times, has achieved a position of real importance, and is universally respected by Churchmen—except by the small band of irreconcilables who would apparently be well content if there were no Bishops at all. Why judges, and generals, and railway directors, and the Committee of the Marylebone Cricket Club, may meet together privately and come to important decisions without offence, and Bishops may not—or, if they do, why their judicious closing of doors against the reporter and the interviewer should evoke complaints of "secret meetings," it is hard to understand. Fortunately, these unworthy criticisms do not hurt the Bishops; but they do hurt the Evangelical party, which unhappily gets the credit of them.

The only later developments worth noticing have been the Houses of Laymen and the Boards of Missions. The former have escaped the usual opposition, although they are sometimes spoken of rather slightingly as mere debating societies. So in a sense they are; but Archbishop Benson never did a wiser thing than instituting them, and thus preparing the way for future Houses with definite functions.

It is now within the power of those who have disparaged them to help to supply their lack of influence; but will they do it? The other development, the Boards of Missions for the Provinces of Canterbury and York, caused more apprehension; but if the Boards were for a time rather a "bogey," they have assuredly turned out to be the mildest "bogey" that ever was seen. It is curious that men do not perceive the inconsistency of complaining that the Church cares little for Missions and then of objecting to a plan so judiciously worked out that it brings missionary enterprise under the notice of the Church as a body without in the least interfering with the great Missionary Societies — the Societies which, in the days when the Church was asleep, undertook its neglected duty.

There are two other subjects which should be briefly referred to. One is Ecclesiastical Courts. When the Church Association won suit after suit, the High Church party declined to recognize the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as an interpreter of Church law, and the Evangelical party complained of this bitterly. It is a question, however, whether it was not the accident of the Privy Council decisions coinciding with Evangelical views that secured Evangelical support. It was but a few years earlier that the clergy of both parties united in a strong declaration against the Privy Council decision in the *Essays and Reviews* case; and one cannot help observing that Evangelical enthusiasm for the Privy Council has considerably

cooled since it confirmed Archbishop Benson's Lincoln Judgment. Now, no Court is infallible; decisions may sometimes be right and sometimes wrong. But it does not lie in our mouths, after protesting ourselves, to complain of others protesting in their turn. However, when Archbishop Tait found that High Churchmen would not obey the Privy Council, he obtained a Royal Commission to consider the whole question and recommend a Court which all would respect. The Report of the Commission appeared after his death, under the auspices of Archbishop Benson. Its proposals were at once condemned by a considerable section of the Evangelical party; but it is worth noting that on this occasion two thousand Evangelical clergymen signed a memorial in favour of the Report, headed by Bishop Perry, Dean W. R. Fremantle, Dean Payne-Smith, Archdeacons J. W. Bardsley (now Bishop of Carlisle), T. T. Perowne, and Richardson; Canons Bell, Carus, Garbett, Tristram; Dr. Boultbee, Daniel Wilson, H. C. G. Moule, etc.

The last subject to be noticed is Church Patronage. When the General Election of 1886 dispelled the fear of Disestablishment which had prevailed in the preceding year, Archbishop Benson determined to use the respite to promote much-needed reforms in the Church, and Patronage and Discipline were the first questions he took up. Year after year he persevered, in the teeth of grave difficulties. In his later and more practical proposals he was helped and guided

by a well-known Evangelical Churchman, a high authority on Ecclesiastical Law; and the *Record* supported him strongly. But the militant section of Evangelicals again took up a position of antagonism, and joined with the clerical agents and traders in advowsons to put every obstacle in his way. The ground of their action was fear of giving more power to the Bishops. Was this consistent with the constant cry, "What are the Bishops about that they tolerate the Ritualists?"

And now we are face to face with another great question of Church Development and Reform. Influential Churchmen of various parties are combining to obtain for the laity—the real laity of the Church, who love it and support it and work for it—some effective voice in its administration. That is what Autonomy means. Considering the natural tendency of Church dignitaries to keep unimpaired whatever power they have, and of the clergy generally to exalt their order, it is truly a wonderful thing that such a combination should be possible; and yet many Evangelicals are gravely shaking their heads over the movement, and others are vehemently protesting against it, preferring to leave the administration of the Church in the hands of an assembly composed in part of men who hate the Church and are ready to do it all the harm they can, and in part of men who decline to be *bothered* with matters for which they care nothing. What is the reason for this opposition? If we may judge from some public

utterances, it is chiefly because although Lord Halifax and the *Church Times* are against the movement, many other High Churchmen are identified with it. Apparently, the Evangelical party is regarded as a kind of Parliamentary Opposition, and Lord Randolph Churchill's memorable maxim is to be their guide, "It is the business of an Opposition to oppose." That is an immoral principle even in politics. It is the business of the Party in opposition to support the Government when it does right, and not to assume that everything it does is wrong; and then, when its policy is honestly believed, on its merits, to be a wrong one, to meet it with an opposition all the more weighty because that immoral maxim has not been followed. Much more strongly does this apply to a Church party, supposed to be guided by high Christian principles. Its business, most emphatically, is *not* to suspect every scheme put forth or supported by men of high character who belong to another Church party, but to consider each proposal impartially, on its merits; and if a generous respect for fair and honest opponents is added to the impartiality, so much the better.

Now, it is not the part of this paper to discuss the proposals for Church Autonomy on their merits. I make no attempt to answer the question, "Who are the laity?" nor do I pledge myself to agree with the answers which others may give. My object is to remind my Evangelical brethren how much our cause has suffered in the past from the suspicious and impracticable

attitude of some of them towards the various developments of Church life and organization which have marked the Victorian Era, and particularly from the readiness with which those of our own leaders have been assailed who have taken their part in those developments. The spirit that branded men like Ryle, Garbett, and Hoare with the invidious epithet "Neo-Evangelical" is still alive amongst us; and it is alienating not a few of the most earnest and spiritually-minded of the younger clergy and laity. I appeal, at all events, to the great middle division, if I may so speak, of our Evangelical body to adopt a nobler, a more large-hearted, a more practical policy. We can have great influence in the Church of England if we act together in a high-minded way, if we refuse to indulge in panics or to conjure up "bogeys." We are a minority, it is true. We always have been, and I believe we always shall be. If Evangelicalism is true, it can never be popular. But a minority which is respected can exercise immense influence. We may make up our minds that Autonomy in some form is coming. With such a consensus of opinion among leading Churchmen of all ranks and all parties in its favour, it cannot be delayed very long. No doubt the Evangelical body is strong enough to put serious obstacles in its way; but they will be swept aside in time, and the day will then come when we shall be complaining that we are not consulted, but left out in the cold. That is what I wish to avert. Let us read the signs of the

times. Let us be ready to join with any class of Churchmen if by so doing we can help to make the Church more efficient for its practical work for the nation and for the world. If we seek the interests only of our own party, we shall be beaten, and shall deserve to be beaten. If we seek the interests of the Church as a whole, we shall thereby strengthen our own cause—which, without any reflection upon others, we believe to be, upon the whole, the cause of Truth and of the God of Truth. Then, in future days, we shall look back and rejoice that we had our full share in bringing to a happy issue this great reform movement in the Church of England.

Here, so far as the subject of the paper is concerned, I might well stop. But I add a few sentences in hopes of averting misapprehensions.

First, I do not forget that if we Evangelical Churchmen have not always acted wisely towards Church movements, there has been abundant excuse for us. For one thing, it has been too much the custom for other sections of Churchmen to treat us with coldness, and even with contempt. For another thing, the policy of those whom we have felt it necessary to oppose has often been provoking, and often perilous. If it be true that we are not without blame on account of the bitter divisions and controversies that have worked so much mischief, it is assuredly also true that the chief responsibility does not lie with us.

Secondly, the policy of frank co-operation with other Churchmen in matters interesting to all, which this paper advocates, need not, and must not, interfere with our co-operation, in other matters, with Christian men not of our Communion. When the School Board Elections first separated Churchmen and Nonconformists who had been wont to work and pray together, there were those among us who emphasized the division by holding aloof from Bible Society meetings and the like. A greater mistake was never made. Our wisdom is to learn how to co-operate for common objects with men from whom in other ways we differ.

Thirdly, co-operation with others in any direction need not, and must not, prevent the faithful advocacy of those great truths of the Gospel which are especially dear to us, and the vindication of them from attacks, open or secret, from any quarter. Only let it be remembered that, for the purpose of convincing men, definite teaching of truth is more effectual than exposure of error.

Fourthly, and above all, it is the first and foremost duty of Evangelical Churchmen to win men to Christ. The Reformation in England did not begin with opposition to Rome: it began with the preaching of the Gospel. The Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century took little note of the Socinianism or the formalism then so rife among the clergy: it was absorbed in the proclamation of a full and finished salvation. Bishops and University dons

wrote against the doctrines of grace with a vehemence unknown in these days, but the Scotts and Simeons simply went on preaching those doctrines, content to be ignored, and despised, and excluded from ecclesiastical preferment, so long as they were not silenced; and the result was the spread of Evangelical religion by the simple process of making men Evangelical Christians.

THE NEED OF CORPORATE ACTION.

By Rev. W. Hay Aitken, M.A.

Canon of Norwich.

A FAMILIAR proverb warns us against the folly of attempting to change horses while crossing a stream. If, however, the stream be strong, and our wearied horse drifts hopelessly down it, with no apparent intention of ever landing us on the other side, it may become our wisest course to make our way back to shore and seek a better mount. Those of us who believe in the truths to which the Reformation bore witness, and who regard the present revival of Mediævalism with distrust and aversion, find ourselves battling with a very strong current; and the question is surely being forced upon us, Is there any reasonable prospect that the steed we have trusted with the precious freight of so much that we hold dear and sacred will ever bear it safely across? If there seems to be every probability of its being swept hopelessly down the stream, surely our wisdom will lie in recalling that steed, in order to try another.

All must admit that the world of to-day is a very different world from the world of the sixteenth century; and we cannot forget that

we belong to it and not to the sixteenth century world. Can any intelligent person really bring himself to believe that the living heart and mind of the twentieth century are to be practically and permanently controlled by the dead hand of the sixteenth? However much we may deplore the spirit of insubordination that prevails in certain quarters, is it possible to deny our sympathy to those who chafe at restrictions, some of them perhaps of an arbitrary character, imposed with dubious authority upon the Church by people who have been in their graves some three or four hundred years?

To look at the thing from another point of view, can any sane person really believe that our divisions are to be healed, and the excesses that we deplore checked, by a process of antiquarian research? We are extremely grateful to learned specialists, whose industrious labours have saved us from the fear that, in some very important respects, the Prayer Book is not altogether on our side. But, then, unfortunately, there are specialists on the other side who are equally confident that theirs is the only true explanation of the perplexing facts with which we have to deal. If, for instance, I understand Mr. Tomlinson's history of the Ornaments Rubric aright, it owes its origin to fraud and its preservation to ignorance or stupidity. Yet Ritualists have gone to prison because they believe that it is, in what seems to the uninitiated to be the natural meaning of the words, the plain and incontrovertible law of the Church.

And they, too, have their experts, who tell them that they are perfectly right in believing this.

Where both plain men and also experts are thus divided in their interpretation of disputed utterances, what hope is there in an appeal to the intervention of law? Even here we have the unedifying spectacle of divided opinions; and to "the man in the street" it seems difficult to believe that even judges, being human, are not more or less biassed in their findings by their own theological convictions. It is easy to inveigh against "law-breakers," but were the law against poaching as stupidly expressed as is the Ornaments Rubric, could any of us justly be hard upon poachers?

We cannot modify conscientious convictions by force, nor silence theological discussion by an Act of Parliament. We can, indeed, offer to recalcitrant priests a choice between submission or dismissal; and the adoption of that course may possibly become a sad necessity. But should this be attempted in our present circumstances, the ejected will inevitably pose as martyrs in the eyes of those who are convinced that their interpretation of an obscure and perversely expressed rubric is the only right one. And no doubt the glamour of martyrdom will powerfully appeal to the sympathies and chivalrous feeling of many.

If, on the other hand, such strong measures were at length to be taken, as the result of the decision of the living Church, no sensible man could dispute the right of a governing body to

enforce its own decisions. Those who cannot conscientiously accept these decisions must find their remedy in becoming dissenters, whether their dissent lands them in the Roman communion or constrains them to invent for themselves a new sect, which might perhaps bear the appellation of "The Unreformed Church of England." But they could no longer be honoured as martyrs victimised by "a secular court," incapable by its very composition of doing justice to "Catholic" principles.

In speaking thus, it is surely hardly necessary to say that we are not for a moment contemplating the possibility of the expulsion from the Church, by the victory of a somewhat rabid democratic Protestantism, of one of the two great parties, which may be said to have existed ever since the Reformation within her pale. It must be freely conceded by all sensible men that the High Church party (in the historical sense of the term) occupies a position well within the limits of the Reformation settlement; and any attempt to challenge its position on the part of extreme Protestants would, I apprehend, be resented as much by reasonable Evangelicals as by members of that party thus assailed. But it is important that we should clearly discriminate the position of the "orthodox" High Churchman from that of the "Neo-Anglicans" of our period.

The man who is true to the traditions of the historical High Church party takes his stand upon the Prayer Book, albeit his interpretation

of it may seem to many of his fellow Churchmen open to criticism. He will not either supplement or supplant it by the introduction of the Mass, or the use of other Liturgical forms, whose chief merit lies in the fact that they are Roman. He will be at one with those from whom in many respects he differs in frankly recognizing our Church as THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND; and in admitting what the Thirty-fourth Article affirms, that "every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change or abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority"; and he will loyally accept what he believes to have been ordained by his own Church in the exercise of this right.

The Neo-Anglican extremist, on the other hand, combats, not so much any particular interpretation of the Church's enactments, as the right of the National Church to enact, either negatively or positively. With him the interpretation of the "Ornaments Rubric" is a matter of comparative indifference. He cannot admit that the Church has any right to promulgate an "Ornaments Rubric," inasmuch as she is bound in all such matters to regulate her conduct by reference to "so-called" "Catholic Usage." This convenient fetish of "Catholic Usage" is all the more awe-inspiring, because it is sufficiently vague and indefinite to baffle the presumptuous critic who attempts to assign to the phrase any intelligible connotation; while for this very reason it has the additional charm of lending itself to the preference, not to say to the whim, of the innovator.

All this was illustrated at the Lambeth hearing, where it might have been amusing, but for the sadness of the thing, to notice on what entirely different premises the arguments offered by the contending parties rested. The one side might plead that the directions in the Prayer Book were so express and unequivocal on the subject of "Reservation," as to leave no room for reasonable discussion; but the answer of their opponents was practically, "So much the worse for the Prayer Book!"

Now, it is well that we should clearly see what the assumption of this attitude involves. So long as it was only a question of interpretation between English Churchmen that divided them from each other, there was plenty of room for both parties within the pale of the National Church. But if it be demanded of us in the name of the divine authority of the Church that we shall all bow down before the fetish of so-called "Catholic Usage," there is no longer room for Evangelical or Protestant Christians within the Church of our country. All compromise here is impossible. As well might the ancient Jews have sanctioned the worship on the high places, side by side with the ritual of the temple.

If those who belong to this school desire self-government, it is only in order that they may abjure self-government. They are pledged by their very position to refuse to the National Church all right to govern herself; and so they could only use any self-government that they

might gain in handing over themselves and their fellow Churchmen, bound hand and foot, like the victims of the ancient Druids, for the immolation of all that is national at the shrine of Mediæval tradition. Hence, it is obvious that any co-operation with such as these in our attempts at gaining autonomy is out of the question. Their aim is diametrically opposed to ours. But surely this makes it all the more necessary that moderate men of all parties should combine, if it were only to insure ourselves against a common danger.

We have now reached a point at which the policy of "masterly inactivity" is no longer possible. It has been wholly discredited by distressing facts. While Bishops have been sleeping, an enemy has been so busy sowing the tares of Roman doctrine and practice that even the sleepers themselves are beginning to be both perplexed and alarmed. But if we can no longer pursue a *laissez faire* policy, either we must proceed to enforce the law, as at present interpreted by its legal exponents, appealing, if needs be, to the secular arm for increased powers, or we must assert, as a Church, our inalienable right of managing our own affairs.

Now, with these alternatives before us, let us honestly ask ourselves, Is it any longer possible for us to adopt the former? Surely, we who represent the Protestant side of things must put ourselves wholly in the wrong, if we pose as the defenders of an Erastian policy. And if, in doing so, we come into conflict with those

who are already appealing to the mind of the Church in her corporate capacity, we shall be fighting against what is best and worthiest in the spirit of the age, and putting ourselves out of harmony with the instincts of our race. We are surrounded by what are called "free Churches"; and their freedom consists mainly in their exercise of the right of self-government. These may sympathise with our Protestant principles—but they will be utterly unable to sympathise with our methods of maintaining them; while their repugnance to the Mediævalism of our opponents will be modified by the fact that these men are at any rate right in claiming for themselves, as a Church, liberty from State control.

In the political world we are surrounded by democratic institutions; to which the Church is the one conspicuous exception. All our modern legislative development has been in the direction of extending the operation of the democratic idea. How, then, can we hope to carry the country with us if we oppose a movement that is, at any rate in form, democratic, in order to fall back upon enactments which were largely in fact, if not in form, the products of despotism?

Undoubtedly many good and earnest men are shy of meddling in this matter for fear of hastening on disestablishment; but surely this argues but little foresight on their part. Clearly to allow things to drift on, as they now are drifting, is the surest way of bringing about disestablishment. Nothing is gained by shutting

our eyes and living in a fool's paradise. It is easy to sneer at the little handful of vigorous and determined men who are for the moment carrying on the work of agitation, but those who do so must have read history to little purpose if they are not aware that it is just by such agents that great revolutions are brought about when there is a strong force of public opinion behind them.

If, however, the reply be made, "We don't intend to let things drift, this would indeed be to court disestablishment. We demand whatever legislation is necessary to put this thing down"; then you have to reckon with yet another peril to which the continuance of the Church as an Establishment will be exposed. Already a large and increasing party within the High Church ranks are prepared to throw in their lot with the Liberationists rather than submit to what they will regard as the dictation of Parliament. They will claim that in doing so they will be fighting the battle of the Church against Erastianism, and, if they adopt this course, is there not every probability that they will be the masters of the situation? Reinforced by the Irish Roman Catholics and by all the forces of militant Nonconformity, is it not almost certain that they will carry the day? And thus the very men who are prepared to sacrifice the Church's corporate existence for the sake of preserving her in her position as an "Establishment" may find that they have brought about the thing that of all others they have deprecated.

I have endeavoured to shew that on all grounds of higher expediency the only safe course for us to pursue is to claim for the Church her own proper birthright privilege of self-government, and to do it at once. But, ere I close, let me sound an even higher note. Can it be right, can it be pleasing, to the great Head of the Church that we should acquiesce in the continuance of the present state of things? Can it be our Master's will that His Church should be so swathed round with grave-clothes as to be incapable of any sort of corporate action? Can it be His will that we should be so tied and bound by laws imposed by men whose bodies have been lying in their graves for between four and five hundred years as to be unable to give thanks for harvest in one of our beautiful harvest prayers; or to ask a special blessing on a Mission; or to offer a prayer on St. Andrew's day for the conversion of the heathen; or to present an appropriate supplication for any passing matter of pressing interest, without breaking the law of the land? It is positively touching to observe the naïve innocence with which parish priests appeal to their Diocesans, requesting them to sanction all sorts and kinds of special services, as if they were ignorant of the fact that Bishops have no more right to sanction such breaches of the inflexible Act of Uniformity than have church-wardens. Can it be right before Almighty God that we should still expose our parishes to the freaks of our present system (if it deserves the

name) of Church patronage, or refuse the congregation any voice in the selection of its pastor. The thing is wrong; and if acquiescence in wrong-doing is the price that we have to pay for our position as the Established Church, then God's blessing cannot rest upon us if we pay it; and the sooner we cease to be established the better.

Let me conclude by stating in the strongest terms that I can command my profound conviction that the ONLY POSSIBLE WAY OUT OF OUR PRESENT DIFFICULTIES LIES IN THE RESTORATION TO THE CHURCH OF HER PROPER CAPACITY OF CORPORATE ACTION. This is the supreme necessity of the hour.

MISSIONARY CHURCHES AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

By the Rev. H. G. Grey.

Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

It is possible that we may be helped towards a solution of the problems in the Church at home by experiences and experiments in the Mission Field. Two questions suggest themselves—

(1) How far are Churches in the Mission Field already self-governing?

(2) What steps seem likely to be necessary in the future?

In dealing with both these questions it must be borne in mind that it makes a considerable difference whether the Churches are

(*a*) in countries not under the British flag; or

(*b*) in British colonies or dependencies.

In the former case (*a*) we should naturally expect more liberty to modify and initiate; and in fact we generally find it. *E.g.*, take Japan. Concurrently with its advance in politics and civilization, the Japanese character has shewn remarkable independence in its views of Church government. It seems to have impressed itself upon the European and American Missionaries

also. The following paper was lately prepared for distribution to all Christians in Japan:—

"To all whom it may concern, greeting. The following resolution was passed by the General Conference of Missionaries lately assembled in Tokyo:—

"'This Conference of Missionaries, assembled in the city of Tokyo, proclaims its belief that all those who are one with Christ by faith are one body; and it calls upon all those who love the Lord Jesus and His Church in sincerity and truth to pray and to labour for the full realization of such corporate oneness as the Master Himself prayed for on that night in which He was betrayed.'

"After passing the above resolution by a unanimous vote, and pledging themselves to pray and labour for the full realization of such a corporate oneness as that for which the Lord Jesus Himself prayed on the night of His betrayal, the members of the Conference manifested rare and deep emotion by rising and singing the Doxology. We deem it of importance that the sense of this resolution should be made known to all Christians in Japan, and that their earnest prayer and assistance be requested for the realization of the end in view.

"There are two points in the resolution which ought especially to be noticed.

"'1. This Conference. . . proclaims its belief that all those who are one with Christ by faith are one body.' This is the foundation of our efforts for the peace and unity of the Church. The faithful in Christ are one body, hold one faith, partake of one Spirit, serve one Lord, call upon one Father. They are, therefore, in duty bound to avoid all division, and to seek for the full realization of that corporate oneness for which the Lord Himself prayed.

"'2. They call upon all Christians to pray and labour for the oneness for which Christ Himself prayed.' The state of the Churches to-day show that we have not attained to that oneness for which the Lord Jesus prayed on the night of His betrayal. All, therefore, who are called by His name and have the welfare of His Church at heart are exhorted to make His prayer their prayer, His desire their desire, and to pray and labour for its full realization. Should all

Churches with one mind and heart unite in prayer touching this one thing, we doubt not that our Heavenly Father will have respect to our desire, and will reveal to us the right way to the attainment of our end. We, therefore, respectfully make the following suggestions:—

"1. That all pastors and evangelists use the appended prayer or its substance in public worship every Sunday morning.

"2. That all Christians use the appended prayer or its substance in their devotions daily . . . ."

The tone and spirit of this declaration will evidently refuse to be hampered by any narrow principles or Western ecclesiastical rules which are not essential to Christianity. There may perhaps be in Japan the contrary danger of throwing off what is essential or at least generally salutary. Still, the independence looks healthy, and it carefully betakes itself to prayer.

Uganda must now be called a British dependency. But the Church there began its life before the British Resident arrived, and it is far removed from contact with any organized body of European Christians. The progress there has been, and still is, phenomenal. But there is a difference between Uganda and Japan. In Japan the people have abundant confidence in their own brain-power, and are not too ready to follow the advice of the missionaries who are foreigners. In Uganda the far lower level of civilization and the remoteness from ordinary European influences make the people look up to, and depend upon, the Missionary to a great extent. Hence a danger of the Missionaries unconsciously overshadowing the native forces

and characteristics. It is exceedingly difficult to see and to keep to the right course. Influence must be exerted, but it has to be curbed. It has need to be suggestive rather than commanding; and yet it must not keep aloof and leave the native to *unnecessary* painful experiments. The Missionaries must take their places and parts *in* the new Church as it grows; they must share the burdens, and guide and advise without forcing the pace beyond the real opinion of the native Christians.

This may be gathered from the proposals and letters of the Church Missionary Society in regard to the future constitution of the Church of Buganda, the details of which are still under consideration and cannot therefore be quoted.

Of Mission Churches in British Colonies and Dependencies those in India form the largest and most instructive type. There we have to take into consideration

(1) That the Bishops are appointed by the State, and that too the Home, the supreme, Government in England;

(2) That a large proportion of the Chaplains are also State-appointed;

(3) That Missionaries of the Church of England and converts baptized by them are under the control of the State-appointed Bishops.

Hence the Diocesan Conferences—for Synods with legal status and independent powers they are not as yet—consist of chaplains and European and Eurasian laymen, Missionaries,

and Indian clergy and Indian laymen. The question of self-government is thus complicated in India by the further difficulty, if it be so regarded, of racial distinctions.

It has been the opinion of some that this distinction should be used, not, of course, out of pride or invidiousness, but in order to ensure the independence and self-development of a Native Church. It has been urged that the foreign Missionary should, after baptizing and giving some instruction, leave the converts entirely to their own development; that in no other way can the Indian Christians be freed from the overshadowing influence of Western Christianity and the trammels of a State Church.

But after much consideration the view is now more general that the union and co-operation of the two races are desirable, combining (1) the force of conservative precedents through European Missionaries, and (2) freedom to adapt and initiate on Oriental lines through the Indian members. As in Uganda, so here also the foreign Missionary will often have to refrain and even efface himself at times, so as to give no hindrance to the free action of independent Oriental ideas, which are to be encouraged, however strange they may at first seem to Western Christians, so long as they do not contradict essentials. As the native Christians increase, the foreign (European) element will decrease proportionately, and in many districts perhaps disappear entirely; at any rate, the opinion of the natives will develop itself and

carry forward the future Church on Oriental lines, tempered, perhaps, with a wholesome admixture of Western practicality.

One of the most popular sayings at large missionary meetings in England is: "The work must be done by the people themselves; only natives can successfully evangelize natives." Almost every truth is liable to exaggeration. The above is no exception. It is often overstated, and indeed we find little foundation for it in the New Testament. There the fundamental principle laid down is: "Neither Jew nor Greek, neither Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all." The Bishop of Victoria put it clearly ("Church Missionary Intelligencer," December, 1898):—

"Christ founded His Church, not that it might be split up into various sections, national or otherwise, but that the various distinctions between Jews and Gentiles might be broken down, that all His people being knit together in one common bond—'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'—might work together for the salvation of others. And to my mind it is a very open question whether the evangelization of the world is not better carried on by the combination of European and native workers."

Similarly, a native Pastor of Travancore wrote two or three years ago to *The Record*:—

"In the early ages of Mission work the natives worked in subordination to European Missionaries, and were dependent on them. The Church Council system" (a well-meant but only partially successful attempt to set up a Native Church) "has totally separated them and their work. It is now felt by many that there is some weakness in the system. A new method of amalgamation has been suggested. And as the policy has never been tried, it should be premature to condemn it as 'a step of the most retrograde character.' The Church Council system, as laid down by the Rev. Henry Venn, has done its work; and it is time that a

change of policy should be adopted for carrying on God's work in this land in a more satisfactory way, Europeans and natives working together in calling out a people for Himself with marvellous rapidity and success."

When the Travancore Pastor says that the policy of close and equal union of Europeans and Natives in work has never been tried, he means "never *by the Church Missionary Society in India*." The Church Missionary Society have acted on it elsewhere, and other bodies have acted on it in India, as may be seen in the following extracts, in which, however, the chief point to notice is the attempt at formation of a real Church autonomy.

The Indian Witness, an able newspaper issued at Calcutta, representing chiefly the American Methodist Episcopal Church and Mission, says:—

"The Indian Christian community connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church already has a large amount of self-government. The laity have welcome places on all local Church Boards and in Quarterly and District Conferences, and are entitled to representation"—this probably means to act as representatives—"in the Central Conference. Native Ministers have absolutely equal rights with the Foreign Missionaries in the Annual or Ministerial Conferences. In some of these Conferences the native brethren outnumber the foreign, and often outvote them on questions of importance. Natives, also, are not only eligible to, but have seats in the Conference Finance Committees equal in all respects to their Missionary brethren."

Bishop Thoburn, the leader of that Church in India, writes:—

"The ultimate formation of a purely Indian administrative system seems to me to be the natural outcome of this policy."

That is to say that, as the Churches in India grow, the Indians will naturally, by sheer force

of numbers, to say nothing of growth in experience and education, become proportionally so predominant that the foreign element will have practically little or no force—a most desirable *εὐθανασία*. Again he says:—

"In the administration of ecclesiastical affairs no distinction is made between Indians or Foreigners. In our Annual Conferences the Indian members speak with very great freedom, and sometimes are 'provokingly' independent. It is by no means an unusual sight to see the foreign members left in a minority, but very rarely indeed has this ever happened in such a way as seriously to affect the interests of the work. A tendency to depend less upon foreigners in the management of Mission affairs is very apparent. The general opinion among our Missionaries is that the Indian Church will, at least for a century or two to come, be more or less of an amalgamation of foreign and Indian elements. Personally, however, I do not believe that we can reproduce on Indian soil the home Church with which our Society is connected. This can only be done in some of its general outlines. Modifications more or less important are already forcing themselves upon us. I strongly incline to the opinion that the Indian Church of the future will assume forms adapted to the peculiar condition of the people; but what those forms may be can hardly yet be determined. Nearly everything in this matter must be left to providential developments."

Similarly, the present Bishop of Lahore (Dr. Lefroy), when head of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, quite lately wrote:—

"We aim at combining Indians and foreigners in one body for the general administration of the Mission in Delhi.

"The course is to us rather one indicated by necessary principles than adopted on grounds of expediency. We believe that the Church itself is the light-giving body, and that it is of essential importance to train her members to realize that this duty of giving light and bearing witness in this land belongs to her in her corporate capacity and not to any special department or to a foreign section. In India, in

the providence of God, the Body of Christ is composed of English and Indians drawn together into one unity in Him. It is by this body, therefore, thus composed that all Church work, Pastoral, Evangelistic, Educational, etc., must be carried forward.

"In realization of this principle we have in Delhi a Mission Council which meets once a month and which deals with *all questions* touching the general administration of the Mission. Of this body all Missionaries, Clerical and lay, in the Delhi Mission and districts attached thereto are *ex-officio* members; and, from time to time, they also co-opt such members of the Native Church as it is believed will be able to give real assistance in their deliberations. At the present time there are three such native members (the English members numbering nine), and we hope soon to add another.

"With the exception of the experience gained on this Council no effort is made to train Indian Christians in the work of administrations strictly so termed.

"There is, however, another branch of organization of considerable, and I hope growing, importance.

"All male communicants over eighteen years of age, in the congregation are members of the Church Council. This body meets three times a year. For the most part its meetings are perfunctory and of little value. But at the Easter meeting they elect members of a body known as the Central Panchayat, and which is the executive of the Church Council. The central Panchayat has two chief *functions*:—

"(*a*) the disbursement and management of the offertory fund, amounting to between Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 1,200 in the year;

"(*b*) the management of all social questions arising in the Brotherhood."

And again Bishop Lefroy on another occasion wrote:—

"While I do believe that there will always be in the Indian Church a certain amalgam of foreign and Indian elements, these two elements having in point of fact in the providence of God been brought together in this land, I do not at all wish or believe that it will be a mere reproduction of the Church of England."

The opinion of Bishop Lefroy is specially valuable because of his long and intimate knowledge of both natives and English chaplains, and because as Bishop—in which position his opinion is still strongly the same—he knows the *practical difficulties* opposing the combination of the two races in one Church, *e.g.*—

(*a*) The entire dependence as yet of the Native for episcopal ministration on State-appointed Bishops. Yet it would be a great mistake to appoint *racial* Bishops. *Assistant* Bishops, both European and Native, are likely soon to be appointed.

(*b*) The impossibility at present of giving full Synodal powers to the Diocesan Conferences, which, as in England, are strictly only consultative and informal. The Natives cannot formally legislate for themselves. Yet practically on very few points are they hampered by this.

The Church Missionary Society have of late given much attention to the development of self-government. The Memorandum and Resolutions they have issued are a valuable contribution to the question, and a long step in the right direction. They point out that independence is of two kinds: (*a*) ecclesiastical, (*b*) financial. With the former the Church Missionary Society have *directly* nothing to do; but indirectly and in connection with the promotion of *financial* independence much does depend on the Society's action. They have to see that their agents, the Missionaries, do nothing to hinder, and do all they can to guide and help the Natives to

healthy self-government and self-support. And the Society rightly insists that in all countries, in Uganda and Japan equally as in India, the Missionary's right place is *within* the growing Church, to learn as well as to teach, to bear and be loyal to the decisions of the Church as a whole, even when they go against European ideas. The details of representation will have to be carefully worked out; but this has already been done in a few Churches, *e.g.*, Japan; and materials for it exist elsewhere in the previously-formed Native Church Councils, in which the Pastorate or Congregation forms the unit, and adequate lay representation is an essential rule.

This leads to one or two remarks on the second question mentioned at the beginning, "*What steps seem likely to be necessary in the future?*" Probably such as these:—

(1) The existing Diocesan Conferences should be entrusted with real responsibility for legislative and executive powers, *within limits*, at least at first; so as to become real Synods.

(2) Towards this end a graduated system should be established of representation of the laity, starting from the existing rough methods of the Church Missionary Society, Native Church Councils, and the local Councils of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel; and on such principles, *e.g.*, as those of the Irish Church.

(3) Assistant Bishops, but *not distinctively* racial (European and Indian) should be

freely appointed; their support financially coming wholly from the Church in India.

Personally I have little fear of deficiency of support when once the responsibility and power are actually possessed by the laity in due proportion. When the Church of Ireland laity were made really responsible, they took up the whole burden manfully.

There is a further question which may seem outside the present subject; but it is fundamental, and will assuredly press for solution before long. It consists of a two-fold danger admitted in the abstract by all:—

(*a*) Lest we should unconsciously foster Western ideas which are contrary to the genius of the people;

(*b*) Lest we should consciously, from a mistaken idea of their importance, insist on non-essentials as though they were essentials.

We can illustrate both by *Episcopacy*. As to (*a*) the Bishop of Victoria (South China) not long ago said:—

"An English bishop was a very great man and had a great diocese. We carry the same ideas into the mission field. If he were asked whether he knew any Chinaman who was fit to be a bishop, he should say plainly, with the present idea of the episcopate, he did not know a single Chinaman who was fit to take the position. But if they went back to the ancient episcopacy, when every large city had its own bishop, then he was prepared to say he knew half-a-dozen Chinamen who were fit for the position."

As to (*b*) not only the liberty of the Native Churches to choose their mode of government,

but the union of Episcopalians with Presbyterians and others is at stake. Have we the right to teach converts to insist on Episcopacy as essential and to refuse to recognize or fuse with those who adopt another form? Not to quote other authorities, let Dr. Hort's well-weighed conclusion ("Christian Ecclesia," p. 232) be noted:—

"In this, as in so many other things, is seen the futility of endeavouring to make the apostolic history into a set of authoritative precedents to be rigorously copied without regard to time and place, thus turning the Gospel into a second Levitical code. The apostolic age is full of embodiments of purposes and principles of the most instructive kind; but the responsibility of choosing the means was left for ever to the Ecclesia itself, and to each Ecclesia, guided by ancient precedent on the one hand, and adaptation to present and future needs on the other. The lesson-book of the Ecclesia, and of every Ecclesia, is not a law, but a history."

AUTONOMY IN THE UNITED STATES.

By William Reed Huntington, D.D.

Rector of Grace Church, New York.

When the little groups of Church of England men scattered along the Atlantic seaboard undertook, at the close of the revolution that had severed them from the mother country, to gather up such fragments of organization as remained, it was not so much zeal for "autonomy" *qua* autonomy that impelled them as it was the simple wish to keep alive the old ideas of character and worship to which, by education, they were attached. They were not in very buoyant spirits, and had few corporate hopes, Autonomy was forced upon them; they accepted it as one of the by-products of the war. The severance of the political tie that had bound the colonies to the British Crown involved, or was held to involve, a corresponding breakage of the thread which, through the Bishop of London, had given them their rather tenuous connection with the English Church. Action of some sort they were driven to; it was swim or sink.

Among the leaders of the day were two men strikingly contrasted in physique, in

temperament, and in opinions—William White, of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Seabury, of Connecticut; the one a latitudinarian in theology and a republican in politics, the other a sturdy High Churchman, more of the Caroline than of the Georgian type, who had held a chaplain's commission in the British Army, and who, to the day of his death, made no secret of his devotion to the lost cause. To these two minds was mainly due, under God, the shaping of so much of the ecclesiastical policy of the new-born republic as concerned the Anglican portion of its people. It was a most singular blending of influences, and, as the event has proved, a most healthful. Seabury, an ingrained ecclesiastic, looked out for hierarchical rights and sacramental orthodoxy; White, a born statesman, saw to it that the mechanism of the Church, on its legislative and disciplinary side, should be in reasonable harmony with the newly-established civil order. The fifth paragraph of the Preface to the Prayer Book, which it was one of the first acts of the nascent Church to revise and to set forth, pictures the situation perfectly, even if in rather clumsy English:—"When, in the course of Divine Providence, these American States became independent with respect to civil government, their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included; and the different religious denominations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective Churches, and forms of worship,

and discipline in such a manner as they might judge most convenient for their future prosperity, consistently with the constitution and laws of their country."

Simultaneously, or almost simultaneously, with the publication of their adapted Prayer Book, the fathers of the American Episcopal Church set forth a written Constitution embodying such first principles as they considered essential to the right ordering of ecclesiastical life. Later still (1801) a certain half-sanction, the force of which has ever since been in dispute, was given to the Anglican Articles of Religion, their number having been first reduced from thirty-nine to thirty-eight, and certain clauses, supposed to be inconsistent with democratic conditions, expunged. The Articles, therefore, may be dismissed from consideration as having little to do with autonomy; the real stress falls on the Constitution.

Virtually, this document, the Constitution, carries with it, as a part of itself, both the Prayer Book and the Ordinal, since in one of its Articles the Church's formularies of worship are not only prescribed, but are also safeguarded with the utmost care. Whoever, then, would intelligently study Anglican autonomy as it exists under American conditions should take for his manual the Constitution of 1789.

The Constitution, it is proper to state, is at present undergoing a general revision, for the first time since it was formally set forth. Special

alterations in this or that article of the instrument have been made from time to time as occasion has required,* but there has been no complete overhauling until now. If accepted and approved in its amended form by the Church at large, the Constitution will hereafter consist of eleven articles, as follows:—

I.—Of the Functions of the General Convention.

II.—Of the Rights and Duties of Bishops.

III.—Of the Consecration of Bishops for Foreign Lands.

IV.—Of the Rights and Duties of Standing Committees.

V.—Of the Creation of new Dioceses.

VI.—Of Missionary Districts.

VII.—Of Provinces.

VIII.—Of Candidacy for Holy Orders.

IX.—Of the Judiciary of the Church.

X.—Of the Book of Common Prayer.

XI.—Of Alterations and Amendments.

* There happens to be pending, for example, at the present moment a constitutional amendment which reads as follows:—

"But provision may be made by Canon for the temporary use of other forms and directories of worship by congregations not already in union with this Church, who are willing to accept the spiritual oversight of the Bishop of the Diocese."

This amendment, modifying that article of the constitution which deals with the Prayer Book, has for its object to plant the Church (as respects the law of worship) fairly and squarely on the Chicago-Lambeth Platform, commonly known as the "Quadrilateral." It was passed by the General Convention at Washington in 1898, after a debate that lasted several days. It is to come up for ratification or rejection at San Francisco in October of the present year (1901). With its fate the immediate prospects of Church Unity in America are closely identified.

In addition to the Constitution there are some fifty or sixty Canons. The Canons vary in number from Convention to Convention, new ones being demanded by fresh exigencies and old ones falling out because no longer needed. These "Canons ecclesiastical" are supposed to stand in the same relation to the Constitution in which the statute laws of the Republic stand to its Constitution, though there is a serious defect in the parallel to which attention will be called later on. It should further be noted that each diocese has also its own Constitution and Canons designed to meet local needs and preferences, but these are framed in such a way as to avoid anything like conflict with the Constitution and Canons of the General Church.

The limits prescribed for this paper shut out all historical data, save such as are absolutely essential to a right understanding of the way in which autonomy works. I have been asked to combine, if possible, a minimum of theory with a maximum of facts, and this I shall try to do, leaving inferences to the reader.

(1) Units of organization. The units of organization under autonomy in America are three in number—(*a*) the parish, or individual cure; (*b*) the diocese, or group of parochial cures, presided over by a bishop; and (*c*) the national Church, made up of an aggregation of all the dioceses and missionary jurisdictions included within the geographical limits of the United States.*

* The whole Church, therefore, constitutes but one Province, though that term has not yet received final official sanction, and probably will not do so until some scheme for a division into Provinces shall have been approved.

The governing and legislative powers of these several ecclesiastical entities are assigned as follows: (*a*) in the case of the parish, to the *Rector, Wardens and Vestrymen,* a body which numbers, in all, ten or twelve persons, and meets as often as it sees fit; (*b*) in the case of the diocese, to the *Bishop and the Diocesan Convention,* which last meets annually for a session of two or three days, and consists of the clergy of the diocese and lay delegates from the several parishes; (*c*) in the case of the national Church, to the *General Convention,* a synod which meets triennially, for a session of three weeks, and legislates, within the limits of the Constitution, for the whole Church.

The General Convention is made up of two Houses: a "House of Bishops," in which every bishop has a seat (unless retired) and a vote; and a "House of Clerical and Lay Deputies," in which every diocese is entitled to representation by not more than four clergymen and four laymen.

Under this arrangement, the Bishops hold in virtue of their order, and so constitute the permanent element of the legislature; while the clerical and lay deputies continue in office only as they secure, or fail to secure, re-election by the dioceses from which they are sent. The will of the diocese in this regard is expressed through its local Convention, which, as the triennial interval draws towards its close, determines who shall represent it in the larger synod.

An important factor in diocesan life is the body known as the Standing Committee. This consists of six or eight members, and is chosen

annually by the Diocesan Convention. In all but two of the dioceses (Connecticut and Maryland) the Standing Committee is composed of clergymen and laymen in equal numbers. In the two dioceses named, the Committee is wholly clerical. The Standing Committee is a council of advice to the Bishop, it passes judgment on the testimonials of fitness presented by candidates for Holy Orders, and, in the case of elections of bishops that take place when the General Convention is not in session, or is not presently to convene, it is the mouthpiece of the diocese as respects approval or disapproval of the sister diocese's choice. If the General Convention be in session, the approving vote of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies passes as the equivalent of and substitute for the consents of the Standing Committees, but without the acquiescence of the major number of the dioceses, signified by one or other of these two methods, no bishop can be lawfully consecrated. An increasing number of Churchmen complain of this requirement as a hardship, and use it as an argument for the adoption of a provincial system. Why, they ask, should a Bishop and Standing Committee in Texas at one end of the Union pass judgment upon the qualification of a bishop-elect of Maine at the other end? The remonstrance seems not unreasonable.

(2) Metes and bounds. In the case of the General Church there is no boundary question to cause controversy, since its area is conterminous with that of the nation. Diocesan lines

were originally identical with state lines, Virginia constituting one episcopal jurisdiction, Maryland another, Pennsylvania another, and so on, but as the Church increased in numbers this simple arrangement was outgrown, and there are now in the single State of New York no fewer than five dioceses, with the prospect of more to come in the near future. The method of organizing and setting off new dioceses is prescribed, as has been seen, by the Constitution. The lines of a diocese usually coincide with those of some congeries of counties, and when once agreed upon are as fixed and as definite as it is possible to make them. It is otherwise, however, with the parish. Theoretically, the parish, like the diocese, is a geographical entity; really and in fact it is only a geographical expression. I know of only one large city in the Union that possesses carefully drawn parish bounds and lives up to them—the city of Washington. In other cities a parish means, to all intents and purposes, the people who habitually frequent and help to maintain a particular place of worship. Sometimes this collection of people is the purely personal following of a popular preacher, sometimes it is held together by the more reputable bond of historical associations, as for example in the case of Trinity Church, New York, St. Paul's, Baltimore, and Christ Church, Philadelphia; but whatever the secret of the cohesive power that binds the parishioners into oneness, it certainly is something other than the fact that they all of them live within specified territorial

limits. In the rural districts, the theory is that if there be, in a town or village, only one Episcopal Church, the whole area of such town or village constitutes the rector's parish.*

This theory is effective as against clerical intrusions, making it easy for a country parson to inhibit all invaders of his territory; but it sometimes gives occasion to droll misunderstandings between zealous young rectors and the townspeople who are theoretically, but not by consent, the sheep of their pastures. A clergyman of my acquaintance having undertaken to visit all the families resident in his village on the hypothesis that to him, as the duly appointed priest, they all belonged, was discouraged to see confronting him when his knock was answered by one of the cottagers, a doormat with this inscription skilfully woven into its texture: "*We* are Baptists." The theory cannot, for obvious reasons, be as successfully worked in America as it can be in England, where it has the law of the land at the back of it; but the mere attempt to work it does good by suggesting that the territorial parish is the thing

* In this connection, it may be worth while to notice a difference of use in the matter of ecclesiastical titles. In the American Episcopal Church all clergymen who have permanent charge of settled congregations are called "rectors." The words "vicar" and "curate" have but recently come into use, and this only in large cities. In the case of the curate, the name and function stand related to each other in America precisely as they do in England. With "vicar," it is otherwise. A vicar, in an American city, is an assistant minister charged with the management of a dependent chapel planted, usually, in some poor district of the town, and supported wholly, or in part, by the people of the mother-church. Towards this dependent, or semi-dependent, congregation, the vicar stands *in loco rectoris*.

that should be, even though the congregational parish be the thing that is.

(3) Qualifications of voters. In the parish, those, as a general rule, are allowed to vote who either own or hire sittings, or, if the church be a "free and open" one, statedly contribute through the offertory or otherwise towards the maintenance of public worship. In some parishes the right to vote is conceded to all "adherents" or "habitual worshippers," in others it is limited to the baptized. Absolute uniformity in the matter of the suffrage does not exist. Only in sporadic cases is the right of women to the ballot recognized; though the indirect influence of the sex upon parochial destinies is, as it should be, enormous. Such voting as there is takes place, for the most part, at the annual parish meeting at Easter or Advent, when the Wardens and Vestrymen are chosen for the ensuing year. These officials constitute a sort of executive committee who are alike a council of advice to the Rector and a board of control responsible for the temporalities of the cure. At the annual meeting are also chosen (unless local usage remits the matter to the Wardens and Vestrymen) those who are to represent the parish in the Diocesan Convention. In the case of a vacancy in the rectorship, usage varies as to the method of filling it. Sometimes the parishioners openly assembled "call" the new minister and fix his salary; sometimes the Wardens and Vestrymen, acting as the representatives and agents of the parishioners, do it. In

the latter event, care is commonly taken to make sure that the person called is likely to be acceptable to the whole constituency, but when once "settled" the rector is, in theory at least, immovable except by due process of law. He may be, and not seldom is, starved out; he cannot be voted out.

In the Diocesan Convention the Bishop presides, and the clergy and lay representatives sit together, constituting one chamber. Actually, however, the body is bi-cameral, since it is always possible to call, at the close of a debate, for "a vote by orders," in which case the clergy vote by themselves and the laity by themselves, while a concurrence of both orders is essential to an affirmative result. In the General Convention, electoral provisions even more conservative protect things as they are; for this legislature is actually tri-cameral, each one of the three orders possessing a veto against the other two. When we add to this the further consideration that no single General Convention can alter so much as one jot or one tittle of either the Constitution or the Prayer Book (every proposition of change being required to run the gauntlet of two successive Conventions, so as to allow the proposal to seethe in the mind of the Church during a whole triennium), it will be acknowledged that "autonomy" is not such a menace to conservatism as might appear.

With respect to eligibility for lay-membership in the House of Deputies, stricter rules apply than in the case of the parochial and diocesan

councils. No layman may sit as the representative of a diocese unless he be a communicant member of the Church. The House of Deputies, as a matter of fact, compares favourably, for intelligence and ability, with any senate, whether civil or ecclesiastical, that convenes in the United States. It is largely composed of professional men of high standing, and shows a judicial temper not easily disturbed. To "stampede" the House would be an arduous undertaking. Obstruction, though sometimes practised, is held to be bad form.

When questions of doctrine come up in the House of Deputies (and they seldom do) the laymen are, as a rule, either modestly silent or else eloquent against any proposal that even remotely suggests innovation. The late revision of the Prayer Book, for example, which covered a period of twelve years (1880-1892) would probably never have received the assent of the lay deputies but for a solemn assurance, given at the outset, that the existing doctrinal balance should not be disturbed.

On the other hand, when matters that touch the common life of men, such as marriage and divorce, are under debate, the fact that the subject has a doctrinal side does not deter the layman, as manifestly it ought not to deter him, from speaking his mind freely. One of the ablest of existing treatises on the subject just mentioned* came from the pen of a Maryland

* *The Christian Doctrine of Marriage*, by Hugh Davey Evans, LL.D., New York; Hurd and Houghton, 1870.

lawyer who had served for many terms as a member of the House of Deputies; and on the committees of the two Houses, which at present stand charged with the preparation of a canon or canons on the re-marriage of divorced persons, there are several lawyers of repute. Against the incoming of a flood of doctrinaire legislation upon this and kindred subjects the lay mind efficiently protects the Church in council. In general, it may be said that the arguments which satisfy American Churchmen that lay representation in ecclesiastical councils is both right and expedient, are practically identical with those advanced by the late lamented Bishop of Durham in his address to his Diocesan Conference in 1897.* Bishop Westcott there maintains that such representation is a part of "the essential idea of Christianity"; that it is in accord both with New Testament precedent and with the usage of the early Church; and that its discontinuance was due to "intelligible and transitory causes." A further argument with us Americans grows out of the fact that having tried lay representation for a hundred years or more, we have become so firmly and unanimously convinced of its value that nothing would induce us to give it up.

One criticism often passed upon the legislative methods of the American Episcopal Church has a weight more apparent than real. I refer to the fact that in the General Convention every

* See *Lessons from Work*. By Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D., D.C.L. London, Macmillan and Co., 1901. Appendix III.

diocese has voting power equal to that of every other. There is no proportional representation. In the House of Bishops, the Bishop of No-man's-land can balance by his ballot the vote of the Bishop of Washington or the Bishop of New York, while in the House of Deputies the representatives of three skeleton dioceses can, by the simple device of agreeing to call for "a vote by dioceses and orders," block the wishes of a vast majority of the communicants of the Church. It might naturally be supposed that much harm would flow from such an adjustment of voting powers, but thus far such has not been the case. In the long run the voices of those best entitled to be heard prevail. Moreover, if, as sometimes happens, No-man's-land is fortunate enough to possess a particularly able prelate or particularly able deputies, why should the fact that they represent only a few sheep in the wilderness deprive them of their just right to more than ordinary influence?

(4) The Judiciary. The really weak point in American autonomy may be sought and will be found in its machinery of discipline. The inability of an ecclesiastical court, in a country where Church and State have been declared separate, to compel the attendance of witnesses is a serious bar to the successful administration of justice, and is rapidly forcing the conclusion that in all cases where criminal intent is involved it will be wiser to accept the findings of the civil courts and to let it rest at that. In questions of doctrine and ceremonial, the case is,

of course, different, since with these the civil courts can have nothing to do and the summons to witnesses is more likely to be obeyed. As things are, the canons of the several dioceses provide for the establishment of courts of first instance for the trial of priests and deacons, while the mode of trying a bishop is prescribed by a general canon binding upon the whole Church.

Another set of jural difficulties arises out of the non-existence of any court of appeal. Under "autonomy" there is nothing that corresponds to the United States Supreme Court; no tribunal exists, that is to say, competent and empowered to determine which canons passed by the General Convention are constitutional and which are not. To be sure, public opinion adjudicates the matter in the end, but suitors grow weary of waiting for so dilatory a judge. Moreover, it does seem to be a real and not a merely sentimental grievance that under autonomy as it is a clergyman may in one diocese be tried and disciplined for some offence or fancied offence against canon or rubric, for which in another diocese, of a different complexion, he would not be so much as indicted. Some hold that all this will be remedied when a "provincial system" shall have been hammered out, others (perhaps more sensibly) aver that the same beatitude which applies to the country without annals awaits the Church destitute of courts.

(5) Something, perhaps, ought to be said about the methods in use in the American

Episcopal Church for prosecuting missionary work, though there is, of course, no necessary connection between this and autonomy. "The Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society" is understood to embrace in its membership the whole body of the baptized. Since, however, this is a society existent only in theory, and manifestly too large ever to assemble for business, the General Convention is empowered to sit, whenever, during its triennial session, it may elect to do so, as a "Board of Missions." This Board of Missions, in its turn, appoints for executive purposes a Board of Managers, made up of fifteen bishops, fifteen clergymen, and fifteen laymen, and by this last body, with its secretaries and treasurer, the real administrative work of missions is carried on. The central office is in the Church Missions House, New York.

When the General Convention meets as a Board of Missions, the distinction between the two Houses is temporarily obliterated, the bishops and the clerical and lay deputies sitting together as one body. The Board of Missions is supposed to handle only general questions of policy. Meeting, as it does, only once in three years, it can scarcely be expected to do more. Having given such "mandates" to the Board of Managers as it sees fit, it subsides into quiescence, and until another General Convention year comes around the smaller Board is practically supreme. From time to time efforts are made to substitute voluntary Societies like

the S.P.G. and the C.M.S. for the official Board of Missions, but thus far they have never enjoyed more than a temporary success.

To sum up this brief exposition of the practical workings of a non-established Anglicanism, I would urge that while there may be much to be said against autonomy, there is more to be said for it. True, anyone who supposes that autonomy or disestablishment carries with it, or can possibly carry with it, a complete severance of Church and State, takes but a surface view of a deep question. Cavour's famous formula is more plausible than practicable. The two institutions are like a pair of interlocked rings: each has an identity and an integrity of its own, and yet the moment an attempt is made to pull them quite apart they become tangent. The point of tangency differs indeed according to the direction from which the pull comes, but it is always somewhere in the circumferences of the two circles. Wherever either a property claim or the relation known as the contract comes in, there the State insists upon having a voice, and if appealed to will certainly reply. Therefore, since church edifices are property, and the agreements which parishes make with their ministers are contracts, the State, if controversy arise, is bound by the very law of its being to intervene with the balance and the sword. Gallio, as the representative of the civil power, could, it is quite true, drive ecclesiastical litigants from his tribunal with impunity, but that was because the question mooted was a

doctrinal one, an affair of "words and names."* Had the Christian Church happened to possess any realty in Corinth, or had Paul been urging a claim for arrears of salary, the Deputy would scarcely have ventured to treat the cause so cavalierly as he did.

Moreover, in a self-governing country, besides matters of contract and ownership, certain domestic relations exist over which the State must necessarily exercise a measure of control; and, in view of the importance to a free State of an intelligent electorate, there is the further question of primary education to be reckoned with. Hence, as concerns both marriage laws and schools, it is quite impossible either for the State to vacate its claim or for the Church to forsake her duty. Upon all of these subjects, property, contracts, the family and education, both of the two powers, the civil and the ecclesiastical, are sure to legislate, and there must follow either establishment, with an attempt at parallel codes, as in England; or autonomy with some *modus vivendi*, as in the United States; or open antagonism, with the consequent deadlock, as in Italy.

Probably in no other portion of Christendom is ecclesiastical autonomy so absolute in theory as in the United States. The Constitution declares explicitly that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion," and the Constitutions of the several States are either explicitly or implicitly committed in like

* Acts xviii. 15.

manner. Nevertheless, there is lying on my table as I write a book of some seventy pages made up of extracts from the laws of the single State of New York bearing upon the rights and obligations of ecclesiastical bodies.* In his Preface, the compiler of this digest says:—"American statute legislation relating to ecclesiastical organization is developing rapidly. It is evident that we are in the midst of a general movement for the broader introduction of purely ecclesiastical elements into the civil law, creating not, indeed, a civil establishment of religion, but more and more of a legal establishment of Church."

What is claimed, therefore, for autonomy as it exists in the United States is not that it is absolute, but rather

(1) That it is a reversion to primitive type, in that it recognizes the "Spirit-bearing Church" as a body which, so far as concerns its highest interests, its teachings, and its devotions, moves and acts by the concert of all its parts, apostles, elders, *and* brethren:

(2) That it enables the Church to adapt itself to exigencies, to meet newly emergent needs, and to purge itself of bad blood with a freedom and a promptness quite impossible under establishmentarian conditions;

* *Civil Church Law.* Edited by George James Bayles, Ph.D., Lecturer in the Civil Aspects of Ecclesiastical Organization, Columbia University, New York, 1898. Dr. Bayles's phrase "a legal establishment of Church," might easily be misunderstood by English readers. He does not mean that there is a tendency towards a discrimination in favour of any one form of faith or polity.

(3) That it begets and fosters in the laity a sense of obligation with respect to the Church's efficiency and a willingness to contribute both of time and money for the heightening of that efficiency, such as cannot be expected under a system where everything of the nature of responsibility can be thrown back upon either the State or the Clergy.

How far these considerations apply to things as they are in England it is for English rather than for American Churchmen to judge. In two contrasted systems of polity the weak points of the one usually lie precisely opposite the strong points of the other. Appoint bishops as is done in England, and "Favoritism" is the cry; elect them by open ballot, as is the usage in the United States, and the caucus becomes a menace. Insist that lay courts shall try spiritual causes, and you write yourself down an Erastian; insist that only spiritual courts shall have jurisdiction, and you invite the taunt, "How shall the grace of Orders qualify a man to weigh evidence?"

Under autonomy we move along very comfortably in America, agreeing to leave many points open and recognizing much neutral ground. The tripartite schism, so often prophesied as sure to happen to the Church of England in the event of disestablishment, does not happen to us. High, Low, and Broad, we dwell together in a more or less peaceful unity, comforting ourselves with the reflection that if Cephas, Paul, and Apollos could agree to differ, and yet abide in the ship, so can we.

THE AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

By Rev. Professor Cody, M.A.

Wycliffe College, Toronto.

Introduction.

The question of Church Autonomy has no necessary connection with Establishment or Disestablishment. An Established Church may be self-governing; so may one Disestablished or Free. If any feature of an Established Church should lose its original character and usefulness, some other feature might be substituted to perfect its government and make that more real. The Unestablished Colonial and American Churches furnish an illustration of the actual working of the autonomous system in episcopally-governed communions. In Canada, for instance, we have passed the stage of experiment. Autonomy is accepted as an axiom of Church government. We seek only to improve and develop it. We have tested it. We believe in it. We could not progress as an organized body without it.

Growth of Self-Government in Canada.

Self-government was a veritable necessity for the life of the Canadian Church. Various influences were at work to produce it.

(i.) The neighbouring Church in the United States was organized and successfully working

on an autonomous basis. From the very beginning provision was made in its constitution for the admission of the laity to a full share in its Councils. The famous New York Report of 1784, prior to the formation of a General Convention, included among fundamental principles these two: (*a*) that the Church in each State should send to the Convention both clerical *and lay* delegates; and (*b*) that the clergy and laity assembled in Convention should deliberate in one body, though voting separately, and though the concurrence of both should be necessary to the validity of measures. Since 1856 these lay deputies must be communicants. The proximity of an Episcopal Church with a thoroughly democratic constitution could not fail to exert some influence upon the adolescent Church of England in Canada.

(ii.) The Presbyterians and Methodists beside us possessed organized systems of self-government.

(iii.) In proportion as the laity were called on to maintain the services of the Church by their voluntary offerings, did they naturally demand a share in its government. An unsuccessful attempt was once made to establish the Church of England in Upper Canada. Acting in accordance with the provisions of the Constitutional Act passed forty-five years before, the Governor, Sir John Colborne, in 1836 endowed forty-four rectories. This provoked an unpleasant and prolonged agitation. Though Sir John's grant of land remained as a very limited

endowment, all thought of an endowed establishment was abandoned.

Canadian Church a Voluntary Church.

Our Church in Canada is a Church *in* the nation, and she would now only desire to be the Church *of* the nation by her own merits and inherent attractiveness. In spite, therefore, of the discouragement which Dr. Strachan, one of our foremost leaders in early days gave to the "voluntary principle," that principle was adopted by the logic of necessity. The unendowed communions of the Province were vital and active. The small endowments of our Church were quite insufficient to meet the rapidly increasing demands; indeed, they rather tended to hinder the development of lay liberality. The upshot was that Churchmen had to subscribe liberally if they hoped to see their Church keep pace with other Christian communions. And this they very generally did. Doing so, they felt (and Bishop Strachan agreed) they had a right to share in the administration of the Church. Some form of autonomy was inevitable. "No taxation without representation" has been a principle of wide application on this Continent.

(iv.) In 1851 the Bishops of Quebec, Toronto, Newfoundland, Fredericton, and Montreal, met in Quebec, and issued a declaration, containing among other things a virtual advocacy of the holding of Synods. "The Bishops of these dioceses," they said, "experience great difficulty in acting in accordance with their episcopal commissions and prerogatives, and their decisions are liable to misconstruction as if emanating from

their own individual will and not from the general body of the Church." They preferred that their decisions should come as the legislative enactments of the whole Church.

Formation of Synods.

In 1839 Dr. John Strachan, Archdeacon of York (Canada), a shrewd Scotchman, statesman-like, practical, with much of the schoolmaster in his administrative and personal conduct, was appointed first Bishop of Toronto. He had long been impressed with the advisability of giving the laity a practical voice in the assemblies of the Church, and, therefore, lost no time in organizing, in his diocese, a Church Society composed of clergy and laymen who subscribed to the funds. He took counsel with friends in England on the subject of Church Synods, but the essence of their advice was, "Be *very* cautious!"—as if a Scotchman needed exhortations to wariness! He proceeded to hold visitations of his clergy, and invited them to bring one or two of their communicants with them. At one of these gatherings it was decided to apply for permission from the Crown to hold a Synod. In 1853 this informal assembly of Bishop, Clergy and Laity declared itself to be the Synod of the diocese, and in the following year adopted a constitution. The right to set apart sees and appoint Bishops was exercised by the Imperial Government down to the year 1856. In that year the Home authorities ceased to exercise it, and an act was passed by the Canadian Legislature, confirmed next year by the Imperial Parliament, which conferred on the Church of

England in Canada authority to meet in Diocesan and Provincial Synods. The various dioceses, whether then existing or since formed, in due course organized their synods, with constitutions marked by the same general features. The constitution of the Synod of Toronto may be taken as a typical example of all.

Synodical Organization.

(i.) *Diocesan Synods.* Each Synod consists of the Bishop, any Suffragan or Coadjutor, all licensed Priests and Deacons (curates as well as rectors), and Lay Representatives chosen as afterwards described from every parish. In the choice of a Bishop, clergy and laity vote separately, and a majority of each order is necessary to secure an election. Each Diocesan Synod has solemnly declared its desire that the Church should remain an integral portion of the Church of England; has acknowledged the Book of Common Prayer with the Articles to be the true and faithful declaration of the doctrine contained in Holy Scripture; and in particular has upheld "the ancient doctrine of our Church that the King is rightly possessed of the chief government or supremacy over all persons within his dominions, in all causes, ecclesiastical or civil." The subsequently-formed Provincial Synod made the same doctrinal declaration. In consequence the Synods have sought to confine their deliberations and actions to "matters of discipline, the temporalities of the Church, and such regulations of order as may tend to its efficiency and extension." Diocesan Synods

deal with questions that concern the well-being of the Diocese. Such include the method of appointment to parishes, the sustentation of the clergy, the erection and division of parishes, the building of Churches, the security of Church property, the constitution of vestries and the powers and duties of Churchwardens, Mission and Sunday School work, the administration of various funds, such as those for the widows and orphans of deceased clergy, and for clerical superannuation. There is an Executive Committee, consisting of an equal number of clergy and laity, half appointed by the Bishop and half elected by the whole Synod, which discharges necessary duties between the annual or biennial meetings, prepares the general order of business for the sessions, sends out a convening circular containing this, and receives reports of all other committees and submits them to the Synod. Various Standing Committees are elected by the Synod to administer its different funds and to discharge specific regular duties.

(ii.) *Provincial Synods.* Each Diocesan Synod was a separate unit, and indeed tended to act too exclusively as such. Concerted action was needed in matters affecting the wider interests of the Church. To meet this need the Provincial Synod of Canada was formed in 1861, to include the dioceses in Eastern Canada. This Synod consists of the Bishops, who sit by themselves in the Upper House and whose proceedings are known only so far as they themselves publish them ; and of delegates from

the clergy and laity who sit together in the Lower House. The clerical delegates are chosen by the clergy and the lay delegates by the lay representatives of the various Diocesan Synods. This Synod has dealt with such questions as the method of electing a Metropolitan, the procedure in the trial of a Bishop, the Metropolitan Court of Appeal (consisting of the Bishops with three lay legal assessors), the sub-division of dioceses, the appointment of Missionary Bishops, the making of those modifications in the order of the public services already sanctioned by the Convocations of Canterbury and York and by the Imperial Parliament (on Shortened Services, etc.), the method of altering or adding to the Prayer Book, marriage laws, the duties of Lay Readers, the constitution of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (ultimately to be merged in a General Board of Missions under the General Synod), and Degrees in Divinity. The Diocesan Synods have been so tenacious of their rights that the Provincial Synod has scarcely had enough real work to do, and as it meets only every three years there is some danger of burying important matters by referring them to Committees which can report only after this considerable interval.

In the vast Canadian North West sees were also formed, some of them chiefly to provide supervision for the Indian missions, others like Rupert's Land, Qu' Appelle and Calgary to embrace also the work among the incoming

settlers. These dioceses have formed a Provincial Synod of their own.

(iii.) *The General Synod.* A further step remained to be taken. Some one supreme Church assembly for the whole Dominion of Canada was necessary; and after much careful preliminary consultation the General Synod was established in 1893 to embrace the ecclesiastical Provinces of Canada and Rupert's Land and the dioceses in British Columbia. This consists of an Upper House of Bishops and a Lower House of clerical and lay delegates elected respectively by the clergy and laity of the Diocesan Synods. It is to have jurisdiction over the general missionary and educational work of the Church and matters pertaining to the whole Church in Canada. It is too soon to describe its working or estimate its usefulness, as it is still in an inchoate condition and only in process of forming its canons. It has met once since 1894, and will meet again next year (1902). At present there is some question as to jurisdiction between the Provincial Synods and the General.

Summary of position of the Church.

This in outline is the system of Church assemblies in Canada. The Church is not Established, and is supported almost entirely by the voluntary offerings of the people. It is entitled to the exercise of "the powers inherent in its own ecclesiastical constitution and recognized by the Statutes; of rights to the protection of the civil government in the free exercise of religious worship; of rights of self-government

as regards its own members in enforcing its canons and regulations made by its own competent authorities." Resort may be had to the civil tribunals upon questions affecting Church property, but not to determine questions of faith or doctrine.

Lay Qualifications.

In the whole system laymen play a prominent part.

The Vestry.

(i.) The temporalities of each parish are managed by a vestry. In Churches with rented pews the vestry is composed of all pew-holders and seat-holders; in "free Churches" practically of all who declare themselves to be habitual worshippers with the congregation. In some dioceses, such as Nova Scotia and Fredericton, at the Easter vestry meeting the parishioners elect a smaller special vestry, not exceeding twelve members, who with the churchwardens and rector (or without him during a vacancy) constitute a corporation in whom all the property of the parish is vested, the Synod itself having no power over it. The vestry appoints one churchwarden and the rector the other. These, either by themselves or in conjunction with a smaller body to whom the vestry may delegate its powers, have charge of the financial affairs of the congregation.

(ii.) Membership of the vestry does not of itself in most dioceses qualify to elect parochial representatives to the Synod. Those who wish to be electors must sign a solemn declaration that they are members of the Church of England

and of the particular congregation in question; that they are of the full age of twenty-one and have been habitual worshippers with the congregation for at least three months previous, and that they have not voted and do not intend to vote as members of any other congregation at a similar election. But what constitutes a "member of the Church of England" here in Canada? As far back as 1851 the Bishops of British North America were confronted with this question, and they gave it as their opinion that Church membership required (*a*) admission into the Christian covenant by baptism in the name of the Trinity; (*b*) the obligation as far as knowledge and opportunity went to "consent and conform to the rules and ordinances of the Church"; and (*c*) to contribute to its support. There is no authoritative definition. It seems to be left to each man's conscience to say whether he can call himself a member of the Church; but in practical working out for voting purposes membership has come to mean habitual worshipping with a congregation of the Church of England. The rector, wardens and two laymen elected by the vestry are a tribunal to settle finally upon the qualifications of those who have signed the required declaration.

Membership of the Church, What is.

(iii.) The number of lay delegates varies in different dioceses from one to three from each parish. They are usually chosen at the Easter vestry meeting. A lay delegate must be a communicant of at least one year's standing,

Qualifications of Lay Delegates.

of the age of twenty-one, and must have communicated at least three times during the twelve months previous to the election. He need not, however, be a member of the particular congregation which elects him.

Powers of the Laity.

Power of Laity in appointments.

(i.) *In parishes.* As a rule the laity have great influence in the appointment of their rector. In the Dioceses of Nova Scotia and Fredericton the people in self-supporting parishes have the absolute right of election, the only condition being that the clergyman chosen must be in good standing in the Church of England or any Church in communion with her. If the people do not make a choice within six or twelve months, the Bishop appoints, after giving due notice. This is also the practice in the American Church. In most dioceses, however, the power of appointment rests with the Bishop. Before exercising it he is in some dioceses bound to consult with the Churchwardens and parochial lay representatives, such consultation being *bona fide* to ascertain their wishes; in other instances he must appoint one out of a specified number of persons named to him by the parishioners; in still other dioceses his right of appointment is absolute. If a parish is at all endowed the influence of the laity in an appointment will naturally be less; but where, as usual, there is no endowment, the Bishop is presumed to appoint the nominee of the congregation. Even in the

few endowed parishes very rarely would a Bishop be unwise enough to force a clergyman on an unwilling congregation. For that would mean almost the financial and spiritual demoli tion of the general interests of the parish.

Churchwardens, Power of.

The Churchwardens, in addition to their general administration of parochial finance, are charged with the duty of privately remonstrating with the rector in case of any irregularity or novelty contrary to or unauthorized by the Prayer Book, and if need be of reporting him to the Bishop, but they have no right to take the law into their own hands. A meeting of the Vestry is usually called by the incumbent; but during a vacancy, or if the incumbent refuses to call it, the Churchwardens may do so. Indeed, a meeting *must* be called if any six members of the vestry make written request.

Moderating voice of the Laity.

The laity may, and do, exercise a moderating influence over attempted innovations in the con- duct of Divine Service. The extremer forms of ritualistic development are uncommon.

(ii.) *In Synods.* From each parish are chosen lay representatives to the Synod of the diocese. For the most part these fairly represent the tone of thought in their parishes, and as a matter of law the absolute right of election lies with the people alone, and not with the clergy- man. In the Diocesan Synods the laity have and take a full share in the discussion of all questions that arise. No canon or resolution is valid unless it has been ratified by the three orders—Bishop, Clergy and Laity. If a vote

by orders is demanded, as it always may be on a written requisition from a small number of members of each order, a majority of both clergy and laity must be secured. Thus either the Bishop, or a majority of the clergy, or a majority of the laity, can veto any proposed legislation. By the authority of Synod bye-laws, the laity form half of each Standing Committee. Many of the most efficient synodsmen are laymen.

The lay members of the Provincial and General Synods are equal in number to the clerical, and can, and do, freely discuss all matters that come before these bodies. The assent of Bishops, clerical delegates and lay delegates is necessary to the passing of any measure.

Questions of Faith and Doctrine.

Matters of faith and doctrine cannot directly come before the Synods. When Synods were established the laity were anxious that no changes should be made in the doctrinal standards of the Church. The Synods, therefore, solemnly bound themselves to maintain the Book of Common Prayer and the Articles. It is competent for the Synods to make and enforce regulations to secure due obedience to the doctrine and discipline set forth in the Prayer Book. In 1868 a Provincial Synod was devoted almost entirely to the discussion of ritualism, and an effort was made to define the meaning of the Ornaments Rubric. While it was widely held that the Synod was unable to alter a rubric, all agreed that the Synod could

give an explanation or definition of a rubric. After a warm debate a resolution was unanimously passed forbidding the elevation of the elements, the use of incense, the mixing of the wine and water, the use of wafer bread, and strongly disapproving of the use of lights on the Lord's Table and of Vestments. Though little subsequently came of this, the point to note is that laymen took a prominent part in the whole discussion, both speaking and voting.

Further, Canon XIII. of the Provincial Synod of Canada enacts that "no alteration or addition shall be made in the Book of Common Prayer or the version of the Scriptures authorized to be read in the Churches, unless the same shall be enacted at one session and confirmed at another, provided that the confirmation be approved by two-thirds of the House of Bishops and two-thirds of each order of the Lower House." Whatever power to revise the Prayer Book this may indicate, the laity would have full right to speak and vote upon any proposed alterations.

There are, of course, features in our general system capable of improvement. (*a*) Almost every diocese has its own canon on the appointment of clergy. Hopes are entertained that in time these diversities may disappear. Many would prefer the general adoption of the Nova Scotian method. (*b*) There is almost an excess of machinery, and yet it is not kept at work with sufficient continuity. There is an overlapping of work between the Diocesan and higher

Synods. The functions and jurisdictions of the various synods should be more clearly defined, and more power given to the General Synod if it is to be of any use whatever. Provincial Synods should either be abolished or have smaller territorial jurisdiction, and meet more frequently. At present each diocese is too exclusive and independent, and united action of the whole Church is extremely difficult to secure. The North West missions are suffering seriously in consequence. (*c*) Some consider that efficiency would be increased if the Bishops in Provincial and General Synods sat and deliberated with the clergy and laity, retaining the right to retire for consultation and to vote separately as an order. An object-lesson in the advantage of these joint sessions was furnished by the preliminary meetings at which the constitution of the General Synod was formulated.

But any changes adopted would be simply in the direction of introducing more businesslike or laical methods and of perfecting our existing organization. No one, "High," "Low," "Broad," mixture, or nondescript, would seriously think of restricting the laity in the exercise of their present privileges. The mass of the present generation of clergy do not think their dignity lowered or their rights impaired by synodical partnership with the laity. They are only too glad to have the laity take their full and proper share in the work of the Church, spiritual as well as temporal.

General Effects of Laymen's Influence.

Better debates.

1. The presence of the laity in the same House with the clergy (a separate House of Laymen would meet with absolutely no favour in Canada) has led to the application of better business methods and more practical debates. The laymen are not inclined to raise strange, novel, or abstract questions. Their knowledge of actual men and things is large and proves an element most helpful both in committees and in open Synod. There are, of course, long-winded laymen as well as clergymen, but the lay offenders are not so numerous as the clerical, and neither class represents the prevailing Synod type. Synod discussions are, unfortunately, very largely occupied with questions of finance and the like; but frequently in the evening, apart from the regular sessions of Synod, meetings of the nature of conferences are held, at which matters relating to the general welfare of the Church are discussed by both clergy and laity.

Representation of all parties.

2. The schools of thought in the Church are pretty fairly represented on committees, etc. In this respect there has been a marked improvement during the last thirty years. A man of good business ability, of force and common sense, and of fair debating power—no matter to what ecclesiastical type he belongs—will make his mark in the Synod and probably gain a place on important committees. Wherever the clergy or laity of any party are in a

majority they generally elect to the higher Synods delegates of their own way of thinking. This is inevitable as long as a mere majority vote suffices to elect; but methods of proportional representation can be devised to secure the protection of minorities.

Less party strife.

3. Autonomy has undoubtedly lessened the bitterness of party strife. Wherever such has appeared it has been due to clerical aggressiveness. But the constant meeting together and joint discussions of common subjects have caused asperities of word and act largely to disappear. For years there has been little of this bitterness displayed on the floors of the Synods. Distinctively party associations are now scarcely existent. In proportion as the members of our Church have had freedom of action in educational and missionary work, they have given less time and attention to party organization.

Conservatism of Laity.

4. In matters doctrinal the laity are intensely conservative. An instance of their conservatism —carried in this case to what many would regard an excess—is found in the hitherto unsuccessful effort to secure the permissive reading of the Revised Version in the public services of the Church. Much less willing would they be to consent to changes of any moment in the Prayer Book.

Deepening of interest.

5. This synodical organization has tended to educate the laity in the general work of the Church and to deepen their interest in it. They feel that the Church is *theirs* also, and interest

and effort are proportioned to this feeling of partnership.

Recapitulation.

(i.) A member of the Church of England in Canada is one who solemnly declares himself such and shows it by worshipping with and contributing to some specific congregation.

(ii.) Lay Representatives to the Synod must be communicants.

(iii.) The laity, either legally or actually, have great influence in the choice of their rector and in the general conduct of parochial affairs.

(iv.) Clergy and Laity sit together in Synod, although they may vote separately as orders.

(v.) The Lay Representatives to the Diocesan Synods elect from their own number the delegates to the higher Synods.

(vi.) Matters of faith and doctrine do not directly come before the Synods. The Prayer Book and Articles have been solemnly adopted as doctrinal standards. If such questions ever did or could arise the laity would have full right to discuss and vote upon them. *All* matters that are raised do come under their cognizance.

(vii.) The general results of autonomy are the adoption of improved business methods, practical debates, reasonably fair representation of all parties, amelioration of party strife, and increased lay interest in Church work.

Conclusion.

If you ask us, "Is autonomy useful?" we Canadians reply, "Yes, in our experience it has

proved so." If you ask, "Is it workable?" we reply, "Yes, we could not work without it."

Do not laymen form the major part of our Church? Can they not in England, just as well as in Canada and in the United States, be trusted to share directly in its government? Is it safe, wise, or in harmony with the constitutional principles that prevail in the State—principles equally applicable to the Church—to deprive the vast mass of the members of the Church of the right to real representation in its governing bodies? No Protestant, no Moderate Churchman, need fear autonomy, if only the laity are allowed their full and proper place side by side with their clerical brethren in the assemblies of the Church. If this full and proper place is not ultimately conceded, "autonomy" will be a misnomer, and probably a failure. A half-way measure would be of little use. Either continue to endure the anomalies of the present system for a further season or adopt real and thoroughgoing self-government, with whatever Parliamentary safeguards the circumstances of the Establishment demand.

APPENDIX "A."

THE PARLIAMENTARY PROSPECTS OF REFORM.

By the Rt. Hon. Sir John Kennaway, Bart., M.P.

Pressure of many engagements has prevented me accepting the invitation to write an essay in the present volume; but I gladly give leave to reprint the views I expressed in the Church House in 1900 and in the Lambeth Library in February, 1901, on the occasion of the deputation to the Archbishops in connection with the Convocations Bill.

I have nothing to add or to retract from what I said on those occasions; but it is evident that we have been going ahead of public opinion, which requires to be educated on this matter.

The various parties in the Church each seem nervously anxious lest any change in the direction of reform of lay representation should give advantage to those of the other side. They leave out of sight the fact of the great mass of silent lay opinion, which will never be in favour of extreme measures, and may well be trusted to preserve the balance. The party of disestablishment always looks with very suspicious

and unfriendly eyes on any measure calculated to strengthen the Church.

Thus the Bill for the Reform of Clerical Representation in Convocation, which also gave leave for joint sessions of both Houses, introduced by the Archbishop* and passed through the Lords without alteration, met with strongest opposition in the House of Commons. It was even held to involve the repeal of the Act for the submission of the clergy, and had to be withdrawn.

We must bide our time, endeavour to know one another better, must come to some understanding as to the basis of lay franchise, and then we shall confidently hope that Parliament will not refuse to listen to a Church speaking with united voice.

I.—Speech at the Church House, May 25th, 1900, at the annual meeting of the Church Reform League:—

In all matters affecting the welfare and progress of the Church, as in the history of our country, so in the State, each generation, each epoch has its own dangers to contend with, its difficulties to face, its advances to make, and its aspirations at which it aims; and we must take care that the lost opportunities of to-day do not lead to bitter regrets on the morrow. For some years past Church Reform has been in abeyance. We have been obliged rather to look at Church defence; and, naturally, after the separation of the Church from the State in Ireland the party of the Liberationists was encouraged to make attacks upon our Church here, and more especially in Wales, and we can most of us remember the splendid meeting in the Albert Hall to pledge the Church to defend our brethren in Wales. But that plan met with very little encouragement in the

*In the Summer of 1901.

country at large—we may hope that for some time it has received its quietus—and we are more left to ourselves to try and set our own house in order so that we may be able to present a stronger front against aggression, and also to do the work that lies before us. Of course, there is no finality in Church matters any more than in matters of State. Our principles are unchanged; but the problem to be faced is ever the same—the work of the Church to prepare for the coming of our Lord. There is naturally a cry for new methods and new organisation. The Church, like the Army, must be equipped with modern weapons. It must bring its most powerful artillery to bear in the best way, and so also requires the organisation of its forces on an effective basis. And this can only be possible when the Church has authority to speak through the living voice of its own selected representatives, clerical and lay alike. Only in that way can the Church express its aspirations and convictions with the voice of authority. Now Parliament makes no claim to do this. If it did make it the claim would be repudiated. Parliament as at present constituted cannot speak for the Church, and it has no time, nor inclination if it had the time, to deal with questions of doctrine, or to plan schemes of reform. What it naturally looks at is that there was a compact a good many years ago entered into by Parliament—by the State—as to the terms on which the temporalities of each benefice should be held; and it is naturally jealous that there should be any attempt of one party to that bargain to interpret the terms of the contract in a way most agreeable to itself. In Parliament certainly there are many thoughtful and sympathetic members, whether they be Churchmen or Nonconformists, and there is no wish on their part to hamper the development of the Church; but, as I have said, it has had no time and no capacity to undertake reforms. When the Church, speaking as it now does through its own constitutional organs, even though they be imperfectly constituted, asks for leave to draw a scheme of reform for itself, no reasonable man can possibly object to it. This proposal for reform in the government and organisation of the Church has now been under discussion for some time; the Houses of Convocation, the Diocesan Conferences throughout the

country, and the Houses of Laymen of both provinces, all with one voice admit that the time has come for a move forward to be made in this direction.

The question we have to ask ourselves is: Is this proposal involving the creation of a body of lay Church representatives, outside practical politics, or is it urgent? I will take the question as to urgency. I think it is most urgent in view of the crisis through which we are passing. I do not wish to minimise that and the deep distress that has been caused in many quarters at the idea that the Church of England, of all bodies, was getting into a condition in which each man was to be a law unto himself in default of a living authority to lay down the law. The result has been Bills brought forward in Parliament of a very drastic character, and organisations brought into being with the avowed object of making candidates pledge themselves to support extreme measures of this sort. It is always the case that one organisation is met with another, and I see other organisations on the other side are likely to be called into existence. What is to become of the unfortunate Parliamentary candidates between the two it is a little difficult to see. It is a most serious condition, to which we cannot shut our eyes, that in some Parliament—the next or some other—there should be a large majority who might be pledged to take steps the consequences of which would be most terrible to the Church, and might result in its disruption. This is a situation which I think will become more and more acute if it is not dealt with in some such way as we are now proposing. And I do not see any way out of it but that self-government in some form should be given to the Church subject to the veto of Parliament. And how is that to be brought about? By the formation of a strong body of public opinion, which is growing, I am sure, in this direction, very rapidly. This is the only way in which you can influence a Government—even a Government which is led in the House of Commons by Mr. Balfour, who has avowed his own strong belief that the same autonomy should be given to the Church of England as is enjoyed by the Established Church of Scotland. I am sure the position must be difficult, for, as we know, the Government is under some pledge that if the law is not obeyed the Government

will take steps to see that it is obeyed. It would be a very difficult thing to say how that is to be done, and, as I said before, I do not see that it can be done in any way likely to bring peace or benefit to the Church. Therefore I believe that if Churchmen will take the trouble to deal with this question, they will shake off that apathy which sometimes too much distinguishes them, and will realise that the very life of the Church and its progress as the greatest instrument, we believe, under God for good in this or in any generation depends on its going forward and strengthening itself so that it shall be a more efficient instrument than ever before in doing the great work which God has entrusted to it.

II.—Speech on the occasion of the Deputation to the Archbishops in support of the Convocations Bill, Lambeth Library, February 1901:—

The movement for reform pleads as its justification the amazing growth and progress of the Church in the 19th century, and the boundless hope and energy with which we enter upon the 20th. Under our present constitution that growth has gone on, and we have passed through difficulties, by God's blessing, for which we cannot be too thankful. But we hope that greater progress will be made, and that there will be a better chance of the solution of those difficulties if representative bodies of the lay and clerical members of the Church be legally constituted, which would speak with the authority of a living voice and might fairly ask to be allowed by Parliament itself to enter upon the consideration of a scheme of self-government for the Church. Parliament would not undertake it, and I do not think the Church would accept the result if it did. And, therefore, we come to these proposals, and we find ourselves in this position—that the Houses of Convocation are at present the only constitutional mouthpiece of the Church, and those Houses admittedly need reform. What this Bill proposes to do is to declare them capable of reforming themselves and to associate with themselves Houses of Laymen, without whom they are indeed at present, I believe, pledged not to act, while the lay voice comes in again by the power of the Crown or either

House of Parliament to refuse the scheme at its pleasure and will. If this were satisfactorily accomplished with general approval, there is the idea of a further step, that we should come forward and ask that these Houses should be clothed with some further powers; and the same plan in regard to the approval of Parliament would come into force.

The scheme would be brought forward, and its details would be considered and approved till it assumed its final shape. It would then again be submitted to the judgment of Parliament to approve or to reject. The idea is a new one, but we have at all events the precedent set up, and successfully set up, by the Established Church of Scotland. I do not contend that our English ideas and Scotch ideas run in the same groove; but we may fairly point to that as a successful precedent, and therefore this scheme seems to me to commend itself as reasonable at first sight and one which fairly might command the general assent of Churchmen. But if once this principle were accepted the details of the scheme would have to be most jealously watched, and rightly so, for fear that advantage might be taken either to narrow the liberties that we at present enjoy or to extend the borders of our Church beyond those laid down in the Reformation Settlement, to set up Catholic usage (whatever that may mean) as the rule of ritual rather than the Prayer Book, or to transfer legal decision from trained lawyers to ecclesiastics. These are the points which are exciting attention at the present time, and as to these points the fullest security would have to be taken and the powers of the new bodies carefully limited, and also full time given for consideration and discussion so that there should be no opportunity of saying that that scheme had been rushed without full consideration.

Then comes the question,—would Parliament listen to such a scheme at all? I am afraid my experience points to this,—that Parliament, even when it cannot undertake business itself, is most reluctant to part with any powers that it possesses, particularly on questions which excite strong feeling such as this. It might do it, perhaps, on one condition—that the proposal came with practical unanimity from the great body of the Church. If that could be obtained we could go forward feeling we had a good case, and hope for

satisfactory results. If not, I doubt whether it would be wise to bring it before Parliament at all, and whether it would not be better to rely on our own powers. I am conscious also—I think we all are—that there may be wider and deeper issues involved in this matter than might at first sight appear; but we do commend this matter to your Graces' most earnest consideration and respectfully ask for your advice for an idea conceived in no party spirit, but, as we fully believe, in the interests of the Church at large.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's reply to the deputation on this occasion is worthy of being printed *in extenso*. His Grace said*:—

"I do not think it is necessary for me to say much about the general purpose of a Bill† of this nature. I have no doubt at all that it would really add to the force and to the efficiency of the Church if in some effective manner she were intrusted with more ample power of governing herself. I need not say, therefore, that your first clause—empowering the Convocations to reform themselves—is no more than a step towards this end, and is one that I should very heartily support; and the general principle that we ought to form a House of Laymen is one that I should also support, although I think that here is probably the weak point of this Bill. I think that even before we come to the question of how best to establish a House of Laymen, the proposals contained in the fifth clause ought to take precedence. That is, I think that for the efficient working of the Church, we should form the Convocations into a single Synod, and that the Convocations in this way should act for the Church as a whole is essential for anything like real power of self-government. I do not believe in self-government by two separate Convocations for separate districts. I do not mean that the Convocations of the two provinces ought to be swept away by any means, but I think that the real legislation of the Church must come from some synod which shall unite the two, and that this is

* See *Guardian*, February 20th, 1901.

† The Bill then under discussion proposed to ask Parliament to give the Clerical Convocation a "blank cheque," as it has been called, free right to define the lay franchise.

even of more importance for the present purposes than the formation of Houses of Laymen. The weak point, it seems to me, in the Bill is the proposed method of forming Houses of Laymen. I think that we have a claim upon Parliament to admit proposals of this kind in the very fact of the present constitution of Parliament. Parliament originally legislated for the Church without any let or hindrance, and it was submitted to by Churchmen through a very long period. Parliament has, however, been altogether altered in character, not merely by the fact that those who do not belong to the Church are really very powerfully represented there, but also by another fact which does not, I think, often appear in our statements upon this matter. For the union with Scotland brought in all the Scottish members, and the union with Ireland brought in all the Irish members. Now the union with Scotland made it a Parliament, a very large part of which was by no means representative of the Church of England in any sense whatever, and when parties are nearly balanced the introduction of a third element of this kind very often indeed determines which way the balance shall go, and consequently alters the legislation which would otherwise have been obtained. And so the Parliament of England, even presuming its absolute impartiality, yet for all that cannot any longer be so considered to represent the laity of the Church of England as it did represent them, say, in the time when the last Act of Uniformity was passed, and it is, therefore, of importance that we should have some representation of the laity independent of the Parliament, subject to checks no doubt by Parliament as a whole and as representing the whole of the country. That being so, whilst I think it is quite right to ask for the formation of Houses of Laymen, I doubt very much whether it would be possible to persuade Parliament to accept the suggestion made here, because it evidently very much weakens the power of Parliament to deal with that House of Laymen, and there will be a very strong suspicion that a scheme for the representation of the laity in Parliament which emanates entirely from the clergy will not be quite so suitable a representation of the laity as some scheme which shall have a different kind of origin. I should hesitate very much to put a Bill of this kind before Parliament in its present shape for that reason. I think that if it be put before

them we must be prepared to find that Parliament would interfere with that part, and put in provisoes for instance to determine what the franchise should be. If Parliament passes a Bill in which a certain power is given to the Convocations to frame a scheme for Parliament they will add provided that so and so, and will say what is the franchise which they would recognise. I doubt very much whether you will find that Parliament will legislate precisely on the lines that are here laid down. . . . The safeguards I think you know are really very weak, and I doubt very much whether Parliament would quite consent to pass a Bill in which the formation of the Houses of Laymen was left so entirely to clerical hands, and I think it would be almost certain that if they passed a measure drawn up like this they would insert some provisoes for very definitely indicating what they considered to be the proper definition of a lay constituent of the Church of England. It would be quite unnecessary for me to go into detail on the matter, because you can see at once what it is that I mean by saying that this is the weak point of the Bill. I am not saying at all that it is the weak point of the Bill, if you are thinking abstractedly of what is a good Bill, and that we are simply to put forth the best Bill that we can frame, and then say we do not care whether Parliament carries it or not, we have done our duty and Parliament may refuse to listen to us. I do not want to look at the Bill from that point of view. In matters of this sort, if we are to go to Parliament, we must have some consideration of what Parliament will do with the Bill when the Bill is before it, and if we are to bring such a Bill before Parliament, I think it would be necessary to have ourselves prepared to find that Parliament will interfere with a strong hand on this point. We may succeed, of course, in getting them to agree upon provisoes that will not spoil our scheme altogether, but that Parliament will interfere I confess I have very little doubt. And in principle you know you are desiring to revive the power of the laity of ancient days. Well, did the laity of ancient days in any way accept the francise from the clergy? Was it quite parallel to the laity of ancient days to have a scheme which determines who are to be constituents of this House of Laymen? We go now upon the principle of representation, which was not very well known in former times, and

perhaps distinguishes modern Constitutions from the Constitutions of the time when the Church was founded, more than almost everything else that you can mention. We go upon the principle of representation. Well, the laity, if they are to be represented, must be represented by those whom they choose. And this body is practically to take the place which Parliament now occupies. Well, Parliament will say, 'If they are practically to take our place, we must see to it that they do fairly represent those whom they profess to represent.' I think it necessary to speak out upon this point, because it is useless for us to go forward if we are going to stand to a matter of this kind in spite of all the resistance that may be offered to us. I will not deny that for myself I should prefer a House of Laymen that was not simply the offspring of a body of clergymen. I should feel that their independence was a real gain to the Church, and that that sense of independence would very largely depend upon their being formed, not upon lines which the Bishops and clergy had laid down, but upon lines which more exactly represented their own minds. Well, I do not know that there is anything else that needs my comments, but, as I have said, the two things which I care about most in this Bill are, besides the first one—the reform, which I think is very important indeed—but besides that first clause the two things which I care most about are that we should be able to have, able to form, a single synod of the Church for one thing by the union of the two Convocations, leaving to the two Convocations any business which concerns the Provinces of each. We may leave to the province of Canterbury to make by-laws if it likes for the province of Canterbury, and the province of York to make by-laws for the province of York. I want to unite the two in order to make canons and regulations which will bind the whole Church in one. I think that is not the last step which should come, but rather the second; after we have reformed Convocations let us press hard to have power to unite them into one synod. And then, with regard to the Houses of Laymen, which we must have—we shall never get any real self-government without them—I think that we must be very careful how we press anything upon Parliament which will in any way damage, in the eyes of the people of England at large, the independence of those Houses when formed."

The Archbishop of York's reply was very much to the same effect. His Grace was equally emphatic that

"A House of Laymen constituted by a House of Convocation is never likely to command the confidence of the English people generally, and we must signify in any Bill which we bring before Parliament our desire to extend the franchise very widely for the election of the members of that House of Laymen. I am afraid the extent to which I should be prepared to make that enlargement would not commend itself to all who are in this room, for I feel that *we must enlarge the boundaries of our constituency very widely indeed if we are ever to command the confidence of the people.*"

APPENDIX "B."

THE CHURCH FRANCHISE.

By Rev. H. J. Bardsley.

Rector of S. Paul's, Hulme, Manchester.

RATEPAYER or Church member? Among the points raised in connection with the franchise problem this is the one clear and broad issue on which public opinion can arbitrate. Other questions may be determined by the various authorities concerned.* This must be submitted to the nation.

An attempt is sometimes made to foreclose, on constitutional grounds, all discussion of the question. It is asserted that the National Church is co-extensive with the nation, that a

* The details of the scheme for Houses of Laymen, including the details of the franchise, might be determined by convocations acting in conjunction with a convention of the laity, constituted under a scheme which the Home Secretary might be empowered to draw up. This addition to the procedure contemplated in the Convocations Bill of 1900 would meet the criticism of the Archbishop of Canterbury: "a scheme for the representation of the laity which emanates entirely from the clergy." It is useless to expect any approach to unanimity among Churchmen on anything more than the broader issues involved in church reform. The Act of 1874, which regulated the patronage of the Church of Scotland, left the definition of an "adherent" to the General Assembly. "Essays in aid of Church Reform," pp. 90 and 91. It must not be assumed that the franchise law will take its final form at once; *e.g.*—the present writer is convinced that some *cautious* recognition of the extra parochial worshipper will be expedient in the interests of efficient parochial government. But it would be fatuous to urge this point except in a reformed synod.

scheme for lay representation must provide for the representation not of some, but of all, her members, and that to confine the Church franchise to Churchmen would be to reduce the Church to the status of a sect and incur the penalty of disendowment. Can, then, this demurrer be sustained? In the opinion of the present writer there emerges from a review of Church law this contrary principle, that while it offers to all citizens the same rights, it fences them with appropriate ecclesiastical conditions. Every parishioner, for instance, is entitled to Christian burial. But the right is not unconditional: he must be baptized and not lawfully excommunicated. He may claim the ministrations of the minister of his parish church when he brings his children to the font, but he must provide the statutory and canonical security for their Christian upbringing. He must assent to the Apostles' Creed before he receives the laying-on of hands. He may on various grounds be excluded from communion.

In the few instances in which the legislation of the last century created new lay rights it conditioned them. By the Church Building Act of 1831 and the New Parishes Act of 1856, and 6 and 7 Vict., c. 37, churchwardens and trustees of advowsons appointed under the Acts must be members of the Church of England.* By

* The earliest instance which I have met of the use of this term is in an early factory Act, 42 George III., c. 73. By this Act an employer of young persons in cotton or other factories is, if they are members of the Church of England, to take care that they be confirmed after they are fourteen, or before they are eighteen years of age.

6 and 7 William IV., c. 77, and 3 and 4 Vict., c. 113, the same restriction is imposed on lay members of the Ecclesiastical Commission. By the Public Worship Regulation Act the aggrieved parishioner must make a declaration of membership. The Universities Act of 1871 in opening the universities to Nonconformists, reserved rights to members of the Church of England.

It cannot, I think, be fairly argued that the right of every ratepayer to vote at vestry meetings is an exception to this principle of ecclesiastical law. Until a year or two ago their most important duties were purely secular, and they could levy rates on every household. Mr. Toulmin Smith, in his learned work on the "Parish," goes so far as to assert that the wardens were originally civil officers sworn in by the civil authority, and quotes a decision of Lord Coke ("B" Reports, p. 70) to the effect that "their office was merely temporal."* Any inference which might be drawn from the law of vestries is still further weakened by the fact that it is full of anomalies and in large part obsolete,† that the veto of the warden nominated by the incumbent nullifies the action of his elected colleague, and that the ratepayer in ancient parishes loses his powers with respect

* See Toulmin Smith, *Parish*, pp. 69-71. In matters spiritual their office is one of observation. The duty of presenting is imposed, not by statute, but by canons. See, however, Bishop Hobhouse's *Somersetshire Wardens' Accounts* (Introduction).

† In some parishes there is no open vestry; in others the voters are numbered by tens of thousands.

to finance if he refuses to pay the Voluntary Church rate, and in new parishes must act through a warden who is a Churchman.

But what is a member of the Church of England? The proposition that every parishioner is in law deemed "a member of the Church" was definitely rejected by the Courts in *Baker v. Lee* (House of Lords Cases, viii., p. 504), and is merely "a technical deduction from a former state of the law which could not or did not survive the Toleration Acts" (Lord Selborne's Defence, p. 196). A careful definition of the phrase is given by Chancellor Smith in his interesting essay in "Church and Faith" (p. 293):

"By ecclesiastical and civil law all baptised persons domiciled in England are considered and entitled to be treated as lay members of the Church of England, with the exception of persons ordained by a bishop of some branch of the Catholic Church, persons who have been and remain lawfully excommunicated, persons who, by their own language and conduct, or, if they are of immature age, by the language and conduct of those who are responsible for their religious training, expressly, or by necessary implication, disclaim Church membership."

I am not aware that there is any judicial doctrine as to what constitutes a disclaimer. But it would seem to be at least very probable that in the eye of the law the practice of resorting to a registered chapel would imply dissent from the worship of the Church. It must be remembered that the practice of public worship is one of which the law has always taken especial cognisance, and to which it still extends especial encouragement and protection.

Two kinds of public worship are legally recognized—that of the Church of England and of Nonconformists; two kinds of ministers, two kinds of buildings. This two-fold recognition extends to the alternative acts of attending church or chapel. By 9 & 10 Vict. 59, the liability of persons who do not attend church to ecclesiastical censure under 5 & 6 Edw. VI., c. 1, is re-affirmed, a saving clause being inserted for the benefit of dissenters who "usually attend" a chapel. To "resort," therefore, to a chapel would seem to imply association with one of two mutually exclusive sets of alternatives, and consequently disassociation from the other.* At any rate, if the Chancellor's definition is sound, it is certain that a member of the Church of England who does not attend church is, according to the theory of Church law, liable to excommunication and to the consequent loss of the privileges which attach to Church membership.

Finally, it is important to observe that we are not concerned with any proposal to restrict to Churchmen any right which is at present

* This view is supported by the wording of 52 Geo. III. 155, Sec. 4. This Act refers to the Toleration Act of 1688 (1 W. & M., sec. 1, c. 18), which exempted "His Majesty's Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England" from penalties if they made certain declarations. It does not abolish these penalties, but extends the exemptions of the earlier Act, so as to include all persons who preach in or resort to a registered chapel in the category of privileged dissenters. The wording is, "shall be exempt from Pains and Penalties as any person who shall have taken the oaths, etc., under 1 We. M., sess. 1, c. 18." 24 Geo. III., sess. 2, c. 35, describes Churchmen in foreign parts as "persons who profess the public worship of Almighty God according to the liturgy of the Church of England."

exercised by the whole community, but with proposals to include lay members of the Church in the exercise of powers which are at present the monopoly of her beneficed clergy. Certain powers in Convocations* and in parishes are vested in members of the Church who are ordained or beneficed. It seems absurd to argue that the removal for certain purposes of the two latter qualifications involves a revolution in the status of the Church. If an incumbent franchise and a ratepayer franchise are compatible with Establishment, why is a Church member franchise incompatible with it? If the two extremes are possible, why is the mean impossible?

II.—The preceding discussion has, if I am not mistaken, conclusively shewn that the Church member franchise cannot be put out of court on constitutional grounds. We are free, therefore, to enquire which of the two proposals

* Archbishop Tait, in proposing to the Government, in 1880, that facilities should be granted in Parliament to schemes prepared by convocations, urged: "No one proposes that Parliament should abdicate its right of initiating Church legislation." (Life, vol. II., p. 439). The Prayer Book, however, has never been amended since the reign of Elizabeth, unless, to use her phrase, the amendment has been "first liked by the clergy." *c.f.* Hooker Ec. Pol., 8, 6, 11; and Achbishop Wake's statement of the constitutional procedure, quoted Professor Burrow's "Parliament and Church," p. 83. For instances of my generalisation, see statute of 1662; Resolution of 1689 (Lathbury, p. 321); resolution of 1710; and either preambles or debates introductory to Clerical Subscription Act; Act of Uniformity Amendment Act; Tables of Lessons Act. The possibilities of independent legislation by canon are by no means exhausted; *e.g.*, royal license in 1865 to modify law of sponsors (an important matter). *Book of Church Law*, p. 59 (ed. 1899).

before us is the more likely to further the higher interests of the Church and Nation.

I think it must be admitted that a House of Laymen which was elected by the ratepayers, possessed a statutory status, and consisted of communicant Churchmen, would, from a church point of view, be a very useful institution. It is probable that it would be strong in the qualities which make representative assemblies effective. While in theory it would not be representative of them at all, it would in effect express with sufficient accuracy the views of lay members of the Church.

Nor would a House of Laymen elected on this basis be debarred on that account from occupying a very useful and effective place in a scheme for giving to Convocations in conjunction with itself facilities with respect to ecclesiastical legislation. I do not myself think that it would appreciably differ from bodies elected on the basis of a restricted franchise, but let us, for the sake of argument, assume that it would be less in sympathy with Church principles. In this event it would at the worst be less anti-clerical than Parliament, and if it rejected the schemes of Convocations it would do no more than quash them at an earlier stage in the procedure. On the other hand, any objectionable schemes which it might put forward would be rejected by the clerical Houses. We may even assert, with some show of reason, that the position of Convocations would be actually strengthened by their association with a body

which tended to represent the interest of the whole nation in the Church. It is always good for the clergy to be brought face to face with the views of religious laymen, who are not "ecclesiastically minded"; and it is quite certain that the weight which the assent of the Lay Houses to the schemes of Convocations will carry in Parliament will be proportioned to the degree in which they prove to be above or below the suspicion that they possess this characteristic. A House of Laymen, therefore, elected by ratepayers, might be expected to give more help to Convocations in the matter of legislation than a House elected by communicants and consisting of precisely the same men.

Lastly, though the influence of the non-church vote would probably be inappreciable, I believe that there are not a few Nonconformists who take a very deep and intelligent interest in the welfare of the Church, and Churchmen have much to hope and little to fear from a deepening of this interest.

What, then, may be urged on the other side? In the first place, this franchise would arouse more hostility than it would disarm. Those who were inclined to view it with suspicion would find their worse fears confirmed by the arguments of its advocates. It would be regarded as an assertion of the Church membership of Jews, infidels and heretics. Nor would this misinterpretation of the proposal be confined to Churchmen. Much that is best in Nonconformity would under its influence be still further

alienated from the Church. For the opinion of many Nonconformists was expressed by Dr. Dale when at his ordination he replied to the question, "Why do you dissent from the National Church?" "I dissent," he said, "from the National Church of England because I believe that the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men. . . . I cannot admit that the heterogeneous mass of godly and godless people who equally belong to the national establishment constitutes a Christian Church." No statesman in a democratic state builds, if he can help it, upon foundations which are unintelligible to the better conscience of the community at large. An exception cannot be made in the case of an institution, the primary function of which is to influence that conscience.

In the second place, the constitution of the Houses of Laymen should not be discussed, as it usually is, without reference to another reform which is of at least equal importance, the constitution of parochial Church councils. This second reform is essential to the effectual working of the first. It is in his parish and its concerns that the average layman is really interested. The strength, therefore, and real efficiency of the whole system of lay representation will in large measure depend on the establishment of a sub-structure of parochial councils. It was in the sphere of parochial government that the English people mastered the lesson of political freedom, and it is in the parish that the laity of the Church will learn to realise the

greatness and the responsibility which attaches to the lay estate. Is, then, the ratepayer a possible elector to a parochial council? The answer must in part depend upon our conception of the functions of parochial councils.

I will take two schemes as typical of others. Mr. Mellor, in the Bill which he introduced last session into the House of Commons, permits the vestry to elect a council consisting of members of the Church of England, and gives to the council the right of appeal to the Bishop with respect to disputed points of ritual. I do not see anything very objectionable in this proposal if it be considered abstractedly, but it seems to express a mean and starved idea of the nature of a layman's position in the Church. In most parishes such councils would never have any legal duty at all. In no parishes would they be trained and disciplined by constant contact with responsibility. In some they would live and move and have their being in strife, and in these parishes persons who never attended a place of worship might, and probably not seldom would, elect non-communicant churchmen to discuss the administration of a very solemn service which they never attended. The Bill is drawn up with a view to the controversy of the hour and makes no clear appeal to any spiritual principle.

According to the second conception, the Church is "a body compacted by that which every joint supplieth," and its lay members, with the clergy, constitute a kingdom of priests. The establishment of parochial councils according to this view is the recognition of the principle of

the priesthood of the laity. It is this principle which affords the true and only sure basis of the fabric of lay enfranchisement. To ignore it is to build on the sand. It is this conception of the status of the laity which underlies the scheme which was adopted in 1900 by the Manchester Diocesan Conference. According to this scheme the council would be in constant touch with parochial responsibilities. It would regulate by resolution *inter alia* the maintenance and repair of the church and other parochial buildings, the parochial finance and charities. Its assent would be required to changes in accustomed lawful ritual. It would be represented in the government of all the Church elementary schools in the parish, and its voice would be heard in respect to the appointment and compulsory retirement of incumbents. An appeal would lie to the bishop. This is not the place to discuss these proposals, but it is clear, I think, that if parochial councils are ever to be constituted on these lines and are to occupy in the Church of England a place equivalent to, though in some respects differing from, that occupied by the Kirk Sessions in the Presbyterian organization, they must be based on a franchise which at least recognizes the idea of Church membership. To vest such powers as these in the hands of the non-church ratepayers of every parish in the hope that they will not trouble to use them, is, I venture to think, quite impossible. The coincidence of power and responsibility must be asserted in the law. The idea that anyone and everyone has a moral

right to intervene in Church affairs has been too widely inculcated to allow of the matter being left to the consciences of individual voters. On the other hand, the association of responsibility with privilege is a condition of all good government, whether it be democratic or paternal, secular or religious, and is an integral, though often forgotten, factor in the development and discipline of the spiritual life. The failure of the Church of England to give adequate expression to this principle in her law and custom has sapped her energies, impoverished her ideals, and alienated from her cause much that is most vigorous in the manhood of the nation. The assertion of the spiritual character of the lay estate is no mere matter of the protection of individual incumbents, but will prove in the long run the best security for the efficiency and independence of the whole system of lay representation.

A scheme of lay enfranchisement framed on the lines here advocated, would, to use the words of the Cambridge Memorial of 1885, "in effect be national because churchmen exhibit among themselves all the average instincts and ways of Englishmen" (Dr. Hort's Life, Vol. II., pp. 262-3). It would, from the parish upwards, be in touch with the better conscience of the whole community.

I advocate, then, the enfranchisement of adult householders of either sex who are resident in the parish and who are and declare themselves to be members of the Church of England. But, in doing so, I contemplate the possibility of subsequent modifications and definitions.

THEOLOGY LIBRARY
CLAREMONT, CALIF.
A 022408

BX
5150
C5

Church and reform; being essays relating t
reform in the government of the Church o
England. Contributors: the Bishop of
Hereford [and others] With appendices b
Sir John Kennaway and H.J. Bardsley, and
introduction by the Bishop of Liverpool
London, Bemrose, 1902.
xiii, 181p. 20cm.

1. Church of England--Government--Addres
essays, lectures. I. Percival, John, Bp.
Hereford, 1834- 1918.

CCSC/mmb

A022408

A 022408